

Thinking the New

An Interpretation of Gilles Deleuze's Transcendent Thinking

Jaakko Mikael Jekunen

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract</p> <p>In my Master's thesis, I offer a novel interpretation of Gilles Deleuze's (1925-1995) conception of transcendent thinking. As a first approximation, transcendent thinking is an unconscious disruption of quotidian thinking (i.e. empirical thinking). Deleuze's conception is an important attempt at explaining the emergence of thought from material reality. Additionally, it offers insights into the conditions of creating something new in thinking. In Deleuze's account, these two are closely connected.</p> <p>My interpretation is mainly based on Deleuze's <i>Difference and Repetition</i> (1968), but I also draw from Deleuze's other works and philosophers he discusses. Deleuze's reading of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) is important for my interpretation. I proceed by close readings of Deleuze and compare my interpretations to others from secondary literature.</p> <p>My thesis is divided into five chapters and I begin by introducing my reading of the relevant features of Deleuze's overall project in <i>Difference and Repetition</i>. In chapter one, I introduce Deleuze's novel philosophy of difference. According to Deleuze, all continuity we experience is constituted by the interplay of internal difference and hidden repetition. In chapter two, I introduce the relevant features of Deleuze's ontological scheme in <i>Difference and Repetition</i>. According to it, actual objects are constituted through the process of differenciation; two figures of internal difference, the differential relations of virtual Ideas and intensive differences, produce the actual objects we perceive in our experience. Situating Deleuze's transcendent thinking into his overall project is necessary to interpret it correctly and to grasp its significance.</p> <p>Next, I interpret what Deleuze means by thinking. In chapter three, I read Immanuel Kant's (1724–1804) determining judgment (e.g. "This is a dog") as providing a case of Deleuze's empirical thinking. This kind of thinking is what human subjects experience in the quotidian. However, transcendent thinking goes beyond empirical thinking. In chapter four, I show how transcendent thinking is comprised of a series of encounters where the different faculties (i.e. cognitive capabilities) of the thinker are elevated to their transcendent exercise. This series starts as sensibility encounters sensible intensity and it continues as subsequent faculties are traversed by a virtual Idea. In these encounters, the faculties confront their internal differences, which reveal their limits and what is most singular to them. However, intermediary encounters do not correspond to any conscious empirical experiences, nor does the whole of transcendent thinking either.</p> <p>In the final chapter of my Master's thesis, I begin by arguing that my interpretation ameliorates on previous readings. First, it reveals that transcendent thinking is a case of differenciation unravelling through the faculties of a psychic system. Second, my reading distinguishes between empirical thinking and transcendent thinking—both being kinds of thinking, for Deleuze. Third, it clarifies that learning is an instance of transcendent thinking (not vaguely thinking in general). Next, I discuss how transcendent thinking reveals the possibility of creation in thinking. Empirical thinking is incapable of change because in it, the faculties function according to the model of recognition: the thinker only recognizes what is already known using pre-given concepts. Transcendent thinking, as a case of differenciation progressing through the faculties, changes the faculties and, in doing so, transforms the composition of the psychic system. This process is carried out on the level of being and results in something new emerging in thinking. However, transcendent thinking is involuntary and unconscious, leaving the conception of creative agency in <i>Difference and Repetition</i> restricted.</p>		
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Abbreviations

Gilles Deleuze

DR: Difference and Repetition

PCK: Kant's Critical Philosophy

Note on the citations: All direct citations to these and other works by Gilles Deleuze are translated by the writer. Each citation is accompanied by a footnote with the original French, to which the given page numbers refer to.

Immanuel Kant

CPR: Critique of Pure Reason

CPJ: Critique of the Power of Judgement

Introduction

What is thinking? When I plan a grocery list in my head, am I thinking? What about deduction—that ought to count for thinking at least. However, does thinking need to involve production of new thoughts? If the deduction is valid, all that I come up with should already be contained in the premises. Do we ever actually think something new, something we haven't already picked up from somewhere, a book or a past experience?

In my Master's thesis, I am going to introduce a novel interpretation of Gilles Deleuze's (1925–1995)¹ concept “transcendent thinking”. The most significant result of my work here is that it reveals the conditions of creativity in thinking. I build my interpretation unto the novel philosophy of difference Deleuze introduces in *Difference and Repetition* (1968), and the ontological scheme he unveils there. Deleuze's reading of Immanuel Kant provides a model of empirical thinking, which is incapable of creation, as well as functioning as the backdrop for my reading of transcendent thinking.

Methodologically, I will offer close readings of relevant passages and contextualize them in Deleuze's overall project in *Difference and Repetition*. Many of the Deleuze's works of the 60s touch upon the themes of *Difference and Repetition*, but I will focus almost exclusively on *Difference and Repetition*. The book is animated by a very distinct project. It is my conviction that the overall project of *Difference and Repetition* cannot be found in its complexity and coherence in other works², rendering difficult the use of these sources. However, sometimes, we find helpful clarifications and more thorough expositions of interpretations of other thinkers in other works. Deleuze's readings of Immanuel Kant have been especially important for my work. As Deleuze's readings of the history of philosophy arise from his own questions and include highly original (and at times textually unfounded) interpretations, my aim is to understand

¹ Deleuze belongs to the generation of French philosophers who began their philosophical careers in the heyday of structuralism, but who began to question many of the assumptions of this heterogenous movement. For this reason, Deleuze, along with, for instance, such divergent figures as Jacques Derrida (1930–2004) and Jean-François Lyotard (1924–1998), are often classified as post-structuralists. (see Schrift 2006.)

² One exception is the short text *Method of Dramatisation* (1967), which is a transcription of Deleuze's presentation to the French Philosophy Society. This text clearly presents material which can be taken to correlate with the 4th and 5th chapters of *Difference and Repetition*. David Lapoujade shares this conviction (see editor's footnote, Deleuze 2002b, 131). *Logic of Sense* (1969) was released almost simultaneously with *Difference and Repetition* (1968), but exploring their continuities and discontinuities reaches far beyond the scope of my Master's thesis.

Deleuze, not evaluate how these readings portray the philosopher in question³. The early monograph *Kant's Critical Philosophy* (1963) has been important, and I have also used the much later fourth chapter of *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1993), *On Four Poetic Formulas that Might Summarize Kantian Philosophy*⁴, as well as Deleuze's lecture course, *Kant: Synthesis and Time*, from 1978. These texts coincide, contextualize or complement Deleuze's reading of Kant in *Difference and Repetition*⁵.

I also discuss other interpretations of Deleuze's work. However, Deleuze is the object of ever-increasing academic research within philosophy and other fields, and due to the scope of this Master thesis, choosing which secondary sources to examine closer has been necessary. The topic of the thesis has guided me in this, and I believe I have consulted a fairly comprehensive number of studies which treat in detail thinking in *Difference and Repetition*. Daniela Voss's *Conditions of Thought. Deleuze and Transcendental Ideas* (2013) has been especially helpful⁶.

Deleuze's conception of thinking in *Difference and Repetition* is a topic which poses difficulties considering the scope of my Master's thesis. To arrive at thinking, we need to first understand Deleuze's complex ontological scheme, which I introduce in chapter two. Because this scheme is very complex and uses idiosyncratic novel terminology, I cannot justify in detail my interpretations of all the details of it. In the second chapter, I paraphrase Deleuze a lot and rely on interpretations from secondary literature. However, I have striven to discern to the reader (mostly in the footnotes to the text) where definitive interpretational problems arise with Deleuze's ontology. In the last three chapters, where I discuss Deleuze's conception of thinking (both empirical and transcendent) and creation, I provide detailed readings of key passages and other textual evidence and justify each step in my interpretation.

³ Deleuze's readings thinkers from the history of philosophy arise from Deleuze's own questions and his interpretations resemble only faintly the original authors—e.g. Nietzsche as a systematic philosopher of forces in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962). Deleuze himself stated that “I imagined myself as taking the author from the back and making for them a child that would be theirs and, at the same time, be monstrous” (Deleuze 1990, 15).

⁴ Anne Sauvagnargues mentions that this text was first released as a preface to the English translation of *Kant's Critical Philosophy* in 1984 (Sauvagnargues 2010, footnote 2, p. 23), placing it in the relative proximity of the 1978 lectures on Kant.

⁵ In my Master's thesis, the coherence of Deleuze's Kant interpretations cannot be explored in depth.

⁶ Levi Bryant's *Difference and Givenness* (2008) is in many respects a good interpretation of *Difference and Repetition*. It is also one of the few monographs that offers a detailed discussion of Deleuze's conception of thinking. However, there are major problems in Bryant's reading, and I return to them especially in chapter four.

At times, Deleuze only sketches an idea in broad terms, or fails to tackle an important issue at all. There are key questions concerning thinking in *Difference and Repetition* which we must solve ourselves on the basis of the book. In interpreting these issues, I have utilized the principle of charitable interpretation. I have aimed to offer a reading which is most defensible, and which fits together with other aspects of Deleuze's project in *Difference and Repetition*⁷.

My thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one introduces the main themes of *Difference and Repetition*, namely, internal difference and the hidden repetition linked to it. This chapter corresponds to the first two chapters of *Difference and Repetition*, where Deleuze motivates his goals in reference to the history of philosophy. However, I am going to limit my scope to what is important to my topic: thinking. I begin with how Deleuze traces his conception of internal difference to Kant's criticism of Descartes's *cogito*. In short, Kant sees that the act of thought cannot attain itself *per se*, but only as given in time. Deleuze continues that time is the form of change, and as such works as the internal difference of the *cogito*. Next, I outline Deleuze's reading of Deleuze's time as the form of change, and then end the chapter by showing how Deleuze describes the emergence of passive subjectivity through syntheses of time.

In chapter two, I go over Deleuze's ontological scheme, which he introduces in chapters four and five of *Difference and Repetition*. Here, we see how Deleuze introduces three ontological orders: the actual, intensity and the virtual. I navigate through these by showing how Deleuze explains the emergence and persistence of actual objects by them. For Deleuze, intensity, as the order of intensive differences, gives rise to quality and extension, and brings about change—it constitutes actual objects. As actual objects change, virtual Ideas orient this process.

In a sense, my two first chapters constitute a repetition of the same theme⁸. The first chapter discusses Deleuze's motivation and background for his project exclusively in terms of internal difference and hidden repetition. The second chapter introduces Deleuze's ontological scheme, which fulfils the requirements of this novel conception of internal difference. Internal difference

⁷ For example, Deleuze indirectly states that the process of differentiation coincides with transcendent thinking at the end of the third chapter of *Difference and Repetition* (I return to this later). However, he neglects outlining how the faculties and the psychic system fit into this process. I provide an interpretation of this in 4.2.

⁸ The same can be said about chapters 4 and 5 of *Difference and Repetition* being a repetition of chapter 1 and 2, but due to the scope of my Master's thesis, I cannot justify this in detail.

finds its guise in Deleuze's notion of intensity, but it is also exemplified by the differential relations of virtual Ideas, which contain non-representationally all the possible variations of a system. Both of these "figures" of internal difference participate in the process of differentiation—the hidden repetition which engenders persisting actual objects. To properly understand the ontological scheme of *Difference and Repetition*, an understanding of internal difference and hidden repetition is required. What's more, understanding Deleuze's conception of thinking, again, presupposes understanding all of this, as we shall see later.

The third chapter exposes what Deleuze calls "empirical thinking". I introduce it through Deleuze's reading of Kant's determining judgment, and it provides the backdrop for dealing with Deleuze's conception of transcendent thinking. I also discuss Deleuze's criticism of the dogmatic image of thought (a conceptualization of what thinking is) from the perspective of thinking. I close the chapter by discussing Deleuze's reading of Kant's judgment of the sublime as pointing towards the possibility of transcendent thinking. In this way, Deleuze's conception of transcendent thinking builds unto his reading of Kant because he utilizes a modified version of the theory of faculties, and as I argue below, he takes determining judgment to be a kind of thinking—empirical thinking.

In the fourth chapter, I am finally equipped to present my interpretation of transcendent thinking. Transcendent thinking is constituted by a chain of encounters beginning from sensibility. A virtual Idea traverses the faculties, elevating them to their transcendent exercise. The limit object is something which only the faculty in question can encounter, and it opens the faculty to its internal difference. Together, these transcendent exercises of the faculties make up transcendent thinking. In it, the faculties work according to a para-sense, opposed to their harmonious collaboration in their empirical use. The resulting transcendent thinking is involuntary, sub-representational and unconscious (because conscious exercise is empirical and representational), escaping the yoke of representation in the dogmatic image of thought Deleuze criticizes.

In the final chapter, I introduce the conclusions of my study: the ways my interpretation of transcendent thinking ameliorates our understanding of thinking in *Difference and Repetition*, and how this concept reveals the conditions of creation and creativity in thinking. I also note that transcendent thinking leaves little room for human creative agency, or authorship. Next, I

evaluate critically Deleuze's idea of thinking: does Deleuze succeed where his predecessors, and especially Kant, failed according to him? I finish with a discussion of the lines of research my Master's thesis opens.

1. Deleuze's Novel Philosophy of Difference

In the preface of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze outlines the overall goal for his doctoral thesis: to introduce a novel philosophy of difference. First, Deleuze delineates the notion of a "pure difference" or, as I will call it, internal difference⁹. Deleuze accuses the history of philosophy of subjugating difference to other concepts. For example, when we perceive two bottles on the table, we rely on the concept of identity if we distinguish them by referring to their identities: bottle A is different from bottle B, because they do not share the same identity. For Deleuze, both bottles have their internal differences, which is more fundamental than the identity we ascribe to them.

Second, internal difference aligns itself with the notion of "complex repetition" (DR, 2). According to Deleuze, below physical and mechanical repetitions (such as the ticking of a clock), there is a deeper, "hidden repetition", which makes the other kind of repetition possible. However, these two notions, that of an internal difference and a hidden repetition, "seem to unite and mix themselves on all occasions" (DR, 2). Therefore, the overall goal of *Difference and Repetition* is to develop an account of these two notions—something prior philosophy has failed to do adequately.

In this chapter, I am first going to discuss how Deleuze traces his conception of internal difference to Kant's critique of Descartes. For Kant, Descartes was mistaken in taking an act of thought to determine a thinker's existence. The thinker can only attain itself as given in time. However, when the thinker attains itself only as given in time, it attains itself as something different from what it was. This constitutes a moment where the thinker's internal difference is revealed. Second, I am going to discuss how internal difference and hidden repetition are linked to each other. This requires looking at Deleuze's conception of time, as the unchanging form of change. Deleuze's reading of eternal return, as the eternal return of the dissimilar, brings together

⁹ Deleuze refers to this concept by other designations, such as, 'Difference' with a capital 'd' and 'difference-in-itself'.

internal difference and hidden repetition. Third, I will discuss how Deleuze describes the production of passive subjectivity through three syntheses of time.

1.1. Deleuze's Kantian Moment

According to Deleuze, Kant was the first to discover internal difference. This discovery was made in Kant's criticism of Descartes's *cogito*. The act of thought cannot itself determine an existence but, as Kant insists, it must first be determinable, given in time. According to Deleuze, this constitutes the discovery of "internal Difference, which relates *a priori* being and thinking to one another" (DR, 116)¹⁰. Next, I will navigate through Deleuze's reading of Descartes and Kant.

In the first *Meditation*, Descartes sets out to discover a foundation for building the sciences (Descartes 2018 (or. 1641), VII, 17). To discover what could function as a true foundation for all knowledge, Descartes employs the method of doubt to discard all his opinions, which are not necessary. For instance, the senses can be tricked: an object seen from afar can be mistaken to be something other than it is revealed to be in close inspection. Even a dream can be mistaken for real experience. Descartes ends up rejecting sense perception about objects, and beliefs about his own body as a potential foundation. What lies beyond doubt?

In the second *Meditation*, Descartes arrives at the act of doubting, which itself cannot be doubted. When one questions the validity of their own sense perceptions, the perceptions are undermined, but the act of doubting is not—doubting necessarily occurs. Additionally, if the act of doubting cannot be doubted, then the existence of the act of doubt must be true. This must hold true for acts of thought in general: if something is thought, at least that act of thought must exist. Descartes reasons that the "proposition, I am, I exist, is necessarily true every time it is pronounced, or conceived in my mind, by me" (Descartes 2018 (or. 1641), VII, 25)¹¹.

However, a bit further in the second meditation, Descartes asks how long the proposition "I am, I exist" remains certain? His response is "as long as I think". (Descartes 2018 (or. 1641), VII 27)¹².

¹⁰ "[...] Différence interne, et qui rapporte *a priori* l'être et la pensée l'un à l'autre" (DR, 116).

¹¹ "[...] hoc pronuntiatum, *Ego sum, ego existo*, quoties a me profertur, vel mente concipitur, necessario esse verum" (Descartes 2018 (or. 1641), VII, 27).

¹² "Ego sum, ego existo ; certum est. Quandiu autem ? Nempe **quandiu cogito** ; nam forte etiam fieri posset, si cessarem ab omni cogitatione, ut illico totus esse desinerem." (Descartes 2018 (or. 1641), VII, 27, emphasis added.)

Therefore, the act of thought proves or determines the existence of the doubter. The I think (*cogito*) determines the existence of the thinker, the I am (*sum*). The act of thought guarantees the existence of the thinker. The thinker is not what is certain in the beginning, but the existence of the thinker is discerned by Descartes from the *cogito*. This leads Descartes to declare the thinker to be a *res cogitans*, a “thinking thing.” (Descartes 2018 (or. 1641), VII, 27.)

For Kant, Descartes errs in his argument. The crucial mistake occurs when Descartes moves from the *cogito* (“I think”) straight to assert *sum* (“I am”). The *cogito* is something determined, a thinking thing. Whereas, *sum*, is something undetermined. In Deleuze’s reading, Kant’s criticism is to go straight from determined existence to undetermined existence (DR, 116, see also Voss 2013, 126–7). We begin with something determined (I think) and before continuing to something undetermined (I am), we need to render the undetermined *determinable*. To be determinable for Kant, the object needs to be given in time.

Deleuze’s reading is based on Kant’s discussion of the paradox of inner sense (DR, 116)¹³. In the second section of the *Transcendental Deduction*, Kant discusses this paradox. First, inner sense is “the intuition of our self and our inner state” (CRP A33/B49). That is, inner sense is what we attain through introspection, when we delve into what our mind is processing or experiencing. This is distinct from outer sense, which Kant defines as “the subjective condition of sensibility, under which alone outer intuition is possible for us” (CPR A26/B42). In broad strokes, outer sense refers to objects we encounter in experience, whereas inner sense refers to what we encounter in the state of our mind. For Kant, “[t]ime is nothing other than the form of inner sense” (CPR A33/B49). As I introspect, what appears to me are my inner states in a succession, or in a temporal order.

Now we can turn to the paradox of inner sense. What happens when the thinking subject tries to think itself? The thinker turns inwards to introspect its own state. Does the subject attain itself or something else in inner sense? Indeed, Kant answers that the thinking subject can only attain oneself “like other phenomena, not as I am for the understanding but rather as I appear to myself, this is no more and no less difficult than how I can be an object for myself in general” (CPR,

¹³ See also Deleuze’s Kant lectures (Deleuze 1978a; Deleuze 1978b) and *Essays Critical and Clinical* (Deleuze 1993, 43).

B155). The thinking subject thinks itself as an object, therefore, it is not “as I am for the understanding”. The subject only attains itself as an object, not as the subject of thought.

In the passage, Kant distinguishes between what “I am for the understanding” (CPR, B155) and what the act of thought attains, the “appearance” in inner sense. The appearance in inner sense comes as given under the form of time. Therefore, the thinking subject attains its own apparition *in time*. “Hence we must order the determinations of inner sense as appearances in time in just the same way as we order those of outer sense in space (CPR, B156). Just as outer objects are given in time, so too, the object the *cogito* attains is not itself as the I of the understanding, but as the I given in time.

Deleuze prefers to introduce his reading of Kant’s criticism *via* the three terms determination, determinable and determined. Kant uses these as well, in the beginning of the B-edition *Paralogisms*, where he discusses the mistaken arguments of rational psychologists (CPR, A341/B399). “It is not the consciousness of the **determining** self, but only that of the **determinable** self, i.e., of my inner intuition [...], that is the object.” (CPR, B407). So, the object of introspection is determinable inner sense and not the determining I of the *cogito*.

The *cogito*, the determining self, encounters in inner sense the determinable self as given in time. For Deleuze, this means that when the determining meets the determinable, it does not meet itself. Here we see why Deleuze prefers the terms undetermined, determinable and determining for introducing Kant’s criticism of Descartes. Descartes moves from determining thinking, *cogito*, straight to undetermined being, *sum*. For Deleuze, Kant’s critique amounts to saying that we need a third mediating term, the determinable. To pass between these two, the *cogito* as determining attains itself in introspection as *determinable*, given in time, and from there we may logically move to the *undetermined*, the *sum*. (see Lord 2012, 91.)

For Deleuze, this means that the *cogito* cannot encounter its own being *qua* being, but as something already different from itself. Kant’s critique against Descartes amounts to

the discovery of Difference, no more as the empirical difference between two determinations, but as the transcendental Difference between THE determination and that which it determines – no longer as the external

difference which separates, but as the internal Difference which relates *a priori* being and thinking to one another (DR, 116)¹⁴.

An external difference would be the difference between two separate empirical things, such as two books on the table. However, in the case of the undetermined *sum* and the determining *cogito*, the difference is internal, because the *cogito* tries to attain itself and cannot encounter itself *per se*, but only as itself *given in time* (see Lord 2012, 91–4; Sauvagnargues 2010, 23–24).

In the chapter on Kant of *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1993), Deleuze writes that “[t]he Self is in time and does not cease from changing: it is a passive, or more precisely receptive, self which experiences the changes in time.” (Deleuze 1993, 43)¹⁵. Here, Deleuze departs from Kant who maintains that time is the form of inner sense—he does not go on to say that the self would be in time. For Deleuze, time is not just the condition of all inner sense but that time is the “form of everything that changes and moves, but it is an unchanging form and does not change.” (Deleuze 1993, 42)¹⁶. Deleuze’s subject is in time, and this means that it is susceptible to change. Deleuze designates this I, which contains the internal difference, as the “fractured I”: “the I is traversed by a fracture: it is fractured by the pure and empty form of time” (DR, 117; see Lord 2012, 94)¹⁷.

Deleuze continues that “my undetermined existence cannot be determined in any other way but in time, as the existence of a phenomenon, of a phenomenal subject, passive or receptive, *appearing in time*” (DR, 116)¹⁸. Therefore, the cogito attains itself only as a passive subject. This is suggested by Kant as well: “[...] through inner sense we intuit ourselves only as we are internally affected **by our selves**, i.e., as far as inner intuition is concerned we cognize our own subject only as appearance but not in accordance with what it is in itself.” (CPR, B156). In this passage Kant distinguishes between inner sense as an appearance and the subject in “what it is in itself”. The

¹⁴ “[...] la découverte de la Différence, non plus comme différence empirique entre les deux déterminations, mais Différence transcendante entre LA détermination et ce qu’elle détermine – non plus comme différence extérieure qui sépare, mais Différence interne, et qui rapporte *a priori* l’être et la pensée l’un à l’autre.” (DR, 116).

¹⁵ “Le Moi est dans le temps et ne cesse de changer : c’est un moi passif ou plutôt réceptif qui éprouve des changements dans le temps” (Deleuze 1993, 43).

¹⁶ “Il est la forme de tout ce qui change et se meut, mais c’est une forme immuable et qui ne change pas.” (Deleuze 1993, 42)

¹⁷ “[...] le JE est comme traversé d’une fêlure : il est fêlé par la forme pure et vide du temps” (DR, 117), see also Deleuze 1993, 43.

¹⁸ “[...] mon existence indéterminée ne peut être déterminée que *dans le temps*, comme l’existence d’un phénomène, d’un sujet phénoménal, passif ou réceptif *apparaissant dans le temps*” (DR, 116).

determinable self (given in inner sense), is “internally affected” by the thinking subject. This is reminiscent of Deleuze’s description of the subject as passive and receptive.

For Deleuze, this means that the self determines its existence as passive, not as active: “The Self is an act (I think) which determines actively my existence (I am), but which cannot determine it but in time, as the existence of a passive, receptive and changing self, and which only represents the activity of its own thinking.” (Deleuze 1993, 43)¹⁹. So, the self determines its existence in time only as “passive, receptive and changing”. It is not determined as an active self. Instead, the activity of the thinker is only represented, not experienced, according to Deleuze²⁰.

The spontaneity of thinking is, for Deleuze, something the passive self experiences “like an Other [Autre] in himself” (DR, 117). Deleuze sees that the passive self correlates with an “I” in the “I am” and in the “I think”. This has a dire consequence as thinking is “an affectation of a passive self which feels [sent] that its own thinking, its own intelligence, by which, it says I, exercises in himself and on himself, not by himself.” (DR, 117)²¹ This means that, at bottom, thinking is an affectation on the self, it is not truly its “own” activity but something Other, which traverses it. The internal difference Deleuze locates disrupts one strong intuition usually taken for granted: thinking is *my* thinking (in chapter 4, we will see that Deleuze’s transcendent thinking corresponds to this kind of thinking).

In summary, Deleuze traces a reading of Kant, where the thinker discovers its own internal difference when attempting to attain itself. The thinking self is indeed traversed by the fracturing line of time, as the form of change. Deleuze refers to this thinker as the “fractured I”. Kant himself would not agree with this reading²². In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he is clear about the relation between time and the transcendental subject: “Time is therefore merely a subjective

¹⁹ “Le Je est un acte (je pense) qui détermine activement mon existence (je suis), mais ne peut la déterminer que dans le temps, comme l’existence d’un moi passif, réceptif et changeant qui se représente seulement l’activité de sa propre pensée” (Deleuze 1993, 43).

²⁰ Daniela Voss interprets this along the same lines: “[b]y defining time as a form of interiority, Kant introduced a fundamental split in the subject. The Kantian subject is torn between the form of spontaneity, that is the ‘I think’ which accompanies all concept production and guarantees the unity of synthesis, and the empirical self which experiences the effects of thought rather than initiating the act of thought itself.” (Voss 2013, 215.)

²¹ “[...] une affection d’un moi passif qui sent que sa propre pensée, sa propre intelligence, ce par quoi il dit JE, s’exerce en lui et sur lui, non pas par lui” (DR, 117).

²² Deleuze is well-known for imaginative readings. For instance, Anne Sauvagnargues characterized this reading as making “Kantism the spokesperson of his [i.e. Deleuze’s] own philosophy” (Sauvagnargues 2010, 24, my translation).

condition of our (human) intuition [...], and in itself, outside the subject, is nothing.” (CPR A35/B51). For Deleuze, Kant does not take seriously the discovery he has made (see Lord 2012, 94). This reading of Kant’s criticism of Descartes points towards three things. First, a conception of internal difference (in the case of the *cogito*, time as the form under which it attains itself as determinable). Second, how this internal difference engenders the passive subject the *cogito* encounters in inner sense. Third, a conception of thinking which is not the thinking subject’s own thinking, but something engendered in its passivity, as it opens to its internal difference. Later in chapter 4, I am going to show how Deleuze’s transcendent thinking turns out to be just this very kind of thinking.

1.2. Time, Difference and Repetition

In this subchapter, we will uncover Deleuze’s motivation’s for his conception of internal difference and hidden repetition. Later, this will help us in situating Deleuze’s conception of transcendent thinking within the overall project of *Difference and Repetition*.

According to Deleuze, difference has always been subjugated to something else throughout the history of philosophy (see especially the first chapter of *Difference and Repetition* for Deleuze’s critique). For example, when identity is taken to bring about a difference, we say that two things are different because they involve different identities. For instance, two glasses on the table are different because the other has identity ‘A’ and the other ‘B’, and because their identities are different, they must be different. Deleuze argues the same happens with Aristotle. When the genera of ‘animal’ is divided into rational and non-rational, the other branch is the species ‘man’, and the other ‘non-rational animals’. This act of division becomes the instigator of difference. (DR, 45–6; see Somers-Hall 2013, 23–26.) In both cases, difference is something secondary and derived.

For Deleuze, difference is the more fundamental concept, whereas that of identity is derived. He writes that, “[a]ll identities are simulated, produced like an optical ‘effect’ by the more profound play of difference and repetition” (DR, 1)²³. Things like identities and resemblances do exist for Deleuze—he does not deny this. What he objects to, is taking them to be fundamental.

²³ “Toutes les identités ne sont que simulées, produites comme un ‘effet’ optique, par un jeu plus profond qui est celui de la différence et de la répétition” (Deleuze 2013 (1968), 1).

However, to understand internal difference and hidden repetition, Deleuze's conception of time is the key. In the previous subchapter, the *cogito* was exposed to its internal difference when it surrendered to time. Anne Sauvagnargues's writes that time is, for Deleuze, "the transcendental difference, the condition of the determination of all differentiation [différenciation], within thinking itself (Sauvagnargues 2010, 24, my translation). Focusing on time will help explain the link between internal difference and hidden repetition. This amounts to Deleuze following through with his reading of Kantian time²⁴.

In the second lecture of the course *Kant: Synthesis and Time*, Deleuze explores the significance of Kant's idea of time. He refers to two conceptions of time, which Kant rejected (Deleuze 1978b, see also Voss 2013, 213–5). Both come from classical philosophy but Deleuze takes them to sum up different pre-critical views. The first view Deleuze has in mind, is that time is the measure of change²⁵, the "number of change." Time provides a unit by which change can be measured. (Deleuze 1978b.) For instance, if someone drops a ball, a measurable number of seconds pass, as it reaches the floor. According to this view, time can be divided into units, and movements and other changes can be measured by these units of time.

For Deleuze, the underlying conception of time in this view is that time is made up of succession of instants (Deleuze 1978b). Instants pass and they are succeeded. One instant, the ball is in the person's hand, the next it is released, and after several more instants, it hits the ground. Time is defined by the succession of instants, but these instants themselves are demarcated by change. In Deleuze's words, time is "subordinated" to change. (Deleuze 1978b.) If nothing changes, no instant lapses. Time is thus carved out of the succession of instants and anchored to movement or to some other change (such as the deterioration of an onion on the bottom shelf of the fridge—an example of qualitative change).

Deleuze takes this view to be mistaken, since there is an underlying problem in the need for time to be based on succession. If time is the succession of instants, it would itself need another time

²⁴ Deleuze's philosophy of time is a complicated topic in itself. For example, James Williams (2011) has written a monograph on time in *Difference and Repetition* (1968) and *Logic of Sense* (1969). Here, I will limit my scope to what is important for my thesis.

²⁵ The first view is suggested by Aristotle in the fourth book of *Physics*, as he describes time as the number of movement: "[t]ime is: the number of change in respect of before and after" (Aristotle 2008, 219a30–219b5). Deleuze quotes Aristotle's definition without ascribing it to him (Deleuze 1978a).

to succeed in, and this another time would, in turn, need a further time to succeed in, *ad infinitum*. (Deleuze 1978b, see also Deleuze 1993, 42.) In the lecture of March 14, Deleuze states that this is because succession is only a “mode” of time, and therefore we cannot use it to define time as such. For Deleuze, Kant rejects the view that time is subordinated to movement and defined as succession. (Deleuze 1978b.) As time becomes the necessary form of all intuition (CPR, A35/B51), time is no longer subjugated to movement. Instead, time becomes the conditioning of all things, even perceived movements and changes.

The second conception of time rejected by Kant is the Ancient notion of cyclic time. In cyclical time, time is like a circle, revolving around an axis, repeating everything like it was in the previous cycles. (Deleuze 1978b; see Voss 2013, 213–5.) This means that the world follows a pre-established order, and things repeat themselves endlessly²⁶. Deleuze quotes Hamlet to show how this conception of cyclical time is undermined by Kant: “time is out of joint” (act 1, scene 5).²⁷ In the cosmological conception of time, time revolves around an axis: the heavenly bodies perpetuate a regular circular motion, repeating the exact same path again and again²⁸. With Kant, time is, for the first time, unhinged: it becomes a straight line, instead of a circle. (Deleuze 1978b.) Time no longer revolves around the same axis, repeating.

In sum, Kant’s departs from his predecessors in his conception of time, according to Deleuze, as time is dissociated from movement and succession and broken out of a cycle of repetition. Time becomes dissociated from movement, when it becomes the condition of movement and succession, not the other way around. As time is no longer dependent upon the cycle of nature, nature becomes dependent upon time. (Deleuze 1978b.)

However, Deleuze takes Kant’s reconceptualization beyond what Kant would himself take it. Kant insisted on time being the “subjective condition of our (human) intuition [...], and in itself, outside the subject, is nothing” (CPR A35/B51). For Deleuze, these discoveries mean that time is the “form of everything that changes and moves, but it is an unchanging form and does not

²⁶ Deleuze associates this type of cyclical notion of time to Plato’s *Timaeus* (Deleuze 1978b, see Voss 2013, 213–5).

²⁷ Deleuze discusses this line on the lectures on March 14 and 21, and again in the fourth chapter of *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1993), to illustrate the major turning point Kant introduced into philosophy of time.

²⁸ I assume that Deleuze would take Scholastic views of time to involve a Christian world view. It has a beginning point as God creates the world and our current situation would be somewhere after the Fall. The circle would come to an end with the last Judgement. However, I do not know whether Deleuze discusses this possibility, nor examples from other traditions.

change” (Deleuze 1993, 42).²⁹ What we perceive in experience is constantly changing: for instance, an object of experience moves across our field of vision, a flower in the vase deteriorates at an imperceptible rate and so on. For Deleuze, time is the form under which change manifests, or in other words, time is the form of change.

The concept of eternal return³⁰, as it is developed by Deleuze, shows the interdependency of difference and repetition and their connection to time. “*It is not the same which returns, it is not the similar [semblable] which returns, but the Same is the returning of that which returns, that is, of the Different. The similar is the returning of that which returns, that is, of the Dissimilar.*” (DR, 384; see Voss 2013, 87.)³¹ What returns is the different, not the same. This is because everything is in constant change. What returns is not the same, but the different, different from what it was. For example, when I observe a dying flower in a vase from day to day, it returns (repeats itself), but as its deterioration continues, it comes back as different from what it was³².

In eternal return, the consequences of Kant’s temporal revolution are followed through:

Time has to be lived and conceived as time out of joint. Time made into a straight line which eliminates without pity those who engage in it, those who arrive at the scene in this way, those who repeat but only once for all. [...] those who repeat identically are eliminated. They only repeat once. (DR, 381.)³³

The time of Deleuze’s eternal return has broken out of the circle of the cyclical conception. In it, the identical is not repeated but eliminated before it can repeat itself. Time is no longer a circle in

²⁹ “Il est la forme de tout ce qui change et se meut, mais c’est une forme immuable et qui ne change pas” (Deleuze 1993, 42).

³⁰ Already in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962), Deleuze discusses a preliminary interpretation of eternal return (e.g. Deleuze 2010, 28).

³¹ “*Ce n’est pas le même qui revient, ce n’est pas le semblable qui revient, mais le Même est le revenir de ce qui revient, c’est-à-dire du Différent, le semblable est le revenir de ce qui revient, c’est-à-dire du Dissimilaire*” (DR 384).

³² Deleuze is here also thinking about the way contemporary science of his time saw the world. Even if no observable changes occur, on the level particle physics, there is a constant change in the positions of the different particles, as, for instance the electrons circle around the atom they orbit. There is always a level, on which we could potentially observe change.

³³ “Il faut vivre et concevoir le temps hors de ses gonds, le temps mis en ligne droite qui élimine impitoyablement ceux qui s’y engagent, qui viennent ainsi sur la scène, mais qui ne répètent qu’une fois pour toutes. [...] qui répètent identiquement seront éliminés. Ils ne répètent qu’une fois.” (DR, 381.)

which the same repeats but breaks out into a straight line. Time is the form of change, and as such, all things are subordinated to it.

The repetition of eternal return, repetition of that which is different, is in fact the hidden repetition we have mentioned. As an object of experience appears to us as unchanged, for example, a book on the table is repeated looking the same from one moment to the next, it is repeated materially. However, behind or below this apparent repetition lies the hidden repetition, repetition of the dissimilar in eternal return (DR, 2). As the internal difference forces its bearer to repeat itself as different, “[t]he difference is between two repetitions” (DR, 104). That is, as something returns, the internal difference forces it to return as different to what it was. This happens between the repetition of the seemingly same, and the hidden repetition of the dissimilar. In this way, internal difference produces the effect of persisting objects *via* the hidden repetition.

1.3. Three Syntheses of Time and Passive Subjectivity

We saw how Deleuze associates the continuities we observe in experience to material repetition. However, Deleuze also describes how passive subjectivity arises through two syntheses of time. Since no identity is stable, he needs to establish the possibility of (at least seeming) continuity in subjects by showing how they are produced or constituted. The passive subject is a result of two syntheses of time: habit and memory³⁴ (see Voss 2013, 219).

Deleuze’s description of the constitution of passive subjectivity should be read in contrast to Kant. Whereas Kant is interested in the conditions of possible experience, Deleuze is interested in illuminating the conditions of real experience (DR, 94). Levi Bryant notes that Deleuze wants “to determine the conditions under which receptivity is itself possible” (Bryant 2008, 9). Deleuze is not interested in describing how a transcendental subject works, but instead, how concrete, contingent subjectivity emerges³⁵. The perspective shifts, as the conditions of real experience

³⁴ The third synthesis of time in *Difference and Repetition* is eternal return, which I already introduced in the previous subchapter, but it effectuates the disruption of the passive subject, as I show below. Three similar syntheses are discussed in Deleuze’s *Logique of Sense* (1969), and his first collaborative work with Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (1972). However, there seem to be some discontinuity in these accounts (for instance, in *Anti-Oedipus*, the three syntheses seem to have similar functions, but their order differs). I do not have the space to discuss the breath of these similarities here. For more on syntheses of time, see especially Faulkner (2004) and Williams (2011).

³⁵ Levi Bryant notes that the production of receptivity “[...]is not the work of a sovereign subject, but is a production that occurs at the level of being itself” (Bryant 2008, 9). Daniela Voss writes, “Deleuze demands that a transcendental philosophy has to account for the genesis of real experience instead of simply assuming conditions of

should “not be larger than what they condition” (DR, 94, see also Bryant 2008, 61). This means that Deleuze does not want to treat emergence of experience from an abstract perspective (conditions of possible experience), but rather, the conditions of concrete and singular experiences (see Bryant 2008, 62). It is for this reason, that investigating the production of passive subjectivity is important for Deleuze.

The first synthesis of time is “habit”. It constitutes a lived present (“*présent vécu*” or living present, “*présent vivant*”, as Deleuze occasionally writes). Deleuze discusses an example from David Hume. When a mind observes a series of As and Bs alternating, ABAB..., the mind takes the particulars of the past, and forms an expectation of what is to come. A follows B and after B, comes A, and so on. (DR, 96–99; see Voss 2013, 219–21.) This is the expectation a human subject listening to the ticks and tocks of a clock, forming the belief that their alternation will perpetuate.

Deleuze continues that “[...] the contraction designates also the fusion of these successive tick-tocks in a contemplative soul [*âme contemplative*]” (DR, 101)³⁶. However, this does not suggest a pan psychism, a vitalism, nor does it only refer to human subjects. The contemplative soul refers to the point of contraction, the unit of being which is at the centre of the repetition. “A soul must be attributed to the heart, muscles, nerves and cells, but a contemplative soul, whose whole role is to contract a habit” (ibid.).³⁷ The contemplative soul contracts a habit or, so to speak, enacts the first synthesis of time.

Different contemplations involve different durations. The pulse of their rhythms differs. (DR 105.) For instance, the heart of a hummingbird races tenfold that of a human walking. Both are contemplative souls, which have contracted the habit of flexing their muscular tissue pumping blood through the veins of the organism. Deleuze writes that, “[...] it is maybe an ‘irony’ to say that all is contemplation, even rocks and antlers, animals and men” (DR, 102)³⁸. The synthesis of

the possibility of experience. A viewpoint of genesis has to be substituted for a viewpoint of conditioning.” (Voss 2013, 75.)

³⁶ “Mais la contraction désigne aussi la fusion des tic-tac successifs dans une *âme contemplative*” (Deleuze 2013 (or. 1968), 101).

³⁷ “Il faut attribuer une *âme* au cœur, aux muscles, aux nerfs, aux cellules, mais une *âme contemplative* dont tout le rôle est de contracter l’habitude” (DR, 101).

³⁸ “[...] et c’est peut-être une ‘ironie’ de dire que tout est contemplation, même les rochers et les bois, les animaux et les hommes” (DR, 102).

habit is ubiquitous. Rock is a contraction of chemical elements in a similar way as a plank of wood or an organism is. However, the rhythm of contractions differs again, as a rock is formed through millions of years, whereas a human perishes in decades. In this way, the syntheses are not only productive of human and nonhuman subjectivity, but also continuity evidenced on the level of being in general, namely in the form of persisting objects.

There are two sides to the synthesis of habit, first is the perceptual or receptive, and the second the organic³⁹. “The perceived quality merges with the contraction of elementary excitations” (DR, 99; see Voss 2013, 219)⁴⁰. For example, when we contemplate the sky, the elementary excitations of different shades of colour are contracted into the blue of the sky. We form expectations about the continuity of a quality based on many small perceptions. On the level of the contemplative soul, it too contracts particulars to anticipate continuity in what follows. This contraction is the basic principle of the emergence of receptivity, or the perceptual side of the first synthesis.

The human subject is made up of “thousands of passive syntheses, which make us up organically. At the same time, we are habits, as we contract, but we contract by contemplation.” (DR, 101, see Voss 2013, 222.)⁴¹ Organisms are structurally composed of contracting-contemplating selves, or different contemplative souls. This is the organic side of the first synthesis. “We are contracted water, earth, light and air, not only before recognizing or representing them, but before sensing them. Every organism is in its receptive and perceptive elements, as well as in its viscera, a sum of contraction, retentions and expectations.” (DR, 99.)⁴² Organisms are networks of contemplative souls engaged in contraction-contemplation. As Deleuze suggests, their primordial receptivity is functioning before any representative.

³⁹ John Protevi (2012) distinguishes organic and perceptual syntheses from one another (240–1), a distinction sometimes overlooked altogether in secondary literature. I am inclined to see them as possibly co-manifesting. However, a more thorough discussion of this nuance lies beyond the scope of my Master’s thesis.

⁴⁰ “La qualité sentie se confond avec la contraction d’excitations élémentaires [...]” (DR, 99).

⁴¹ “[...] mais d’abord les habitudes primaires que nous sommes, les milliers de synthèses passives qui nous composent organiquement. A la fois, c’est en contractant que nous sommes des habitudes, mais c’est par contemplation que nous contractons” (DR, 101).

⁴² “Nous sommes de l’eau, de la terre, de la lumière et de l’air contractés, non seulement avant de les reconnaître ou de les représenter, mais avant de les sentir. Tout organisme est, dans ses éléments réceptifs et perceptifs, mais aussi dans ses viscères, une somme de contractions, de rétentions et d’attentes.” (DR, 99.)

The two sides of the first synthesis “refer” to one another: “in the constituting passivity, the perceptive syntheses refer [renvoient] to organic syntheses, as the sensibility of the senses, to the primary sensibility that we *are*” (DR, 99)⁴³. The verb ‘renvoyer’ also means ‘to reflect’ and this highlights the reciprocal nature of the perceptual and organic side of the syntheses. Neither of these sides of the synthesis of habit is primary to the other.

What is fundamental, is the internal difference which generates the changes, the return of the dissimilar—the hidden repetition. The synthesis of habit gives us a primordial receptivity unanchored into a preestablished model of sensibility (such as the colour sight of humans). Instead, receptivity is contraction on the level of being. In an organism, the organic side of the synthesis means that it is composed of an organization of different contemplative souls contracting habits (see Protevi 2012). Together the perceptive and organic side of the syntheses make up “the primary sensibility that we *are*” (DR, 99). In this way, different perceptual capacities of organisms arise from these systems of passive syntheses.

In the synthesis of habit, the past and future are dimensions of the lived present (DR, 105; see Voss 2013, 200). Past instants are “retained in the contraction”, and the future lies in the anticipation of the contraction. (DR, 97). In other words, different cases of the past are contracted into the present and an expectation about the future is formed. Both the past, and the future are present in the present. In this way, we contract past sunrises into an expectation about tomorrow’s sunrise. However, this happens to the passive subject “before all memory and reflexion” (DR, 97)⁴⁴.

The synthesis of habit constitutes the two dimensions of the passive subject: its receptive capacity, and its structural organization. In this way, “[t]he passive Self is not defined simply by the receptivity, that is the capacity to feel sensations, but by the contracting contemplation which constitutes the organism itself even before constituting its sensations” (DR, 107)⁴⁵. Habit also

⁴³ “Mais, dans l’ordre de la passivité constituante, les synthèses perceptives renvoient à des synthèses organiques, comme la sensibilité des sens, à une sensibilité primaire que nous *sommes*” (DR, 99).

⁴⁴ “[...] précédant toute mémoire et toute reflexion” (Deleuze 2013 (or. 1968), 97).

⁴⁵ “Le Moi passif ne se définit pas simplement par la réceptivité, c’est-à-dire par la capacité d’éprouver des sensations, mais par la contemplation contractante qui constitue l’organisme lui-même avant d’en constituer les sensations” (DR, 107).

constitutes the present as a contraction of past and future. In this way, the synthesis of habit is the condition of concrete experience.

These contemplating souls form a “system of a dissolved self” (DR, 107). Syntheses of habit, or contraction-contemplations of a contemplating souls, make up a system. This system constitutes a centre of subjectivity, such as a human subject, or another psychic system. In this way, Deleuze does not presuppose a whole, an empirical subject. Instead, with the notion of the synthesis of habit and the way it engenders complex systems, he explains how subjectivity arises from being in time, being under the form of change.

The second synthesis of time is that of memory. The first synthesis of habit is paramount to subjectivity, so, I will be brief here. Deleuze is not referring to an active human memory, a retainer of impressions of past experiences⁴⁶. This active memory relies on the synthesis of habit (DR, 108). For there to be something to be recalled, it needs to be retained in the contraction of the lived present and in this way, habit functions as the condition of the active use of memory. Without the succession created by the synthesis, nothing from the past could be retained or recalled in the present.

The second synthesis of time, memory, provides the being of the past, or the pure past, which grounds the present (DR, 108–109; see Voss 2013, 224). The present instants need something to pass in. This cannot be time itself, according to Deleuze, because if the present would pass in time, this time would also need another time to pass in (DR, 108, see also the preceding subchapter). The present can pass on the condition of “the pure element of past, as the past in general, as the *a priori* past, so that the ancient present finds itself reproducible, and the actual present reflects itself.” (DR, 110)⁴⁷. So, for the present, which has already passed, to be recalled, there needs to be a pure past. The pure past functions as the condition of the present.

⁴⁶ Or in Deleuze’s words, “[...] the active synthesis of memory constitutes it [i.e. the present] as the *aggregation* [“*emboîtement*”] of presents themselves” (DR, 110)⁴⁶.

⁴⁷ “C’est par l’élément pur du passé, comme passé en général, comme passé *a priori*, que tel ancien présent se trouve reproductible, et que l’actuel présent se réfléchit” (DR, 110).

Deleuze introduces the pure past through four paradoxes he ascribes to Henri Bergson's *Matter and Memory*. I will limit my scope here to the fourth paradox, Bergson's cone⁴⁸ (DR, 112). If we were to imagine a pointed cone, its point would be the present and the rest of the cone would make up the entirety of the past. Each segment of the cone includes the whole of the past in a certain state of contraction or relaxation. (ibid.) The segments do not form a succession of instants moving away from the tip of the cone, but each segment is the past in its totality. As we move away from the tip, the entirety of the past becomes more relaxed, more robust in its details. (ibid.; see Voss 2013, 226.) If we think about a subjective memory, the state of affairs it represents, we can imagine the same memory with a different collection of details. If I recall a picnic with some friends, one level would be to remark that it was June and the weather was pleasant. Another would be to recall more details, such as the spot where we sat, how sunlight streamed through the canopy, and so on.

However, the cone here is not the retainer conception of empirical memory. The cone is what works as its foundation: the pure past, an ontological conception of the past, which includes all the states of affairs that have passed. A recalled past instant is but a small portion from a specific segment in a specific state of contraction. The cone includes details about the past events (presumably) up to an infinity of details. The active memory of a subject presupposes the pure past (DR, 112). The pure past is not time, as time is for Deleuze the form of change. The pure past is not a present, either, but as each present passes, they are added to this ontological, pure past. The present is produced through the contraction of the first synthesis *on the basis* of this pure past. So, the first synthesis of time created the lived present, and the second, the past in which the lived present can pass.

The third synthesis of time Deleuze introduces is the eternal return (see 1.1.). Through the first synthesis, passive subjectivity is constituted and the second synthesis grounds the first one. Together the two explain the constitution of passive subjectivity from being in time, under the form of change. The flux of change is oriented towards streams of continuity, which organize the passive subject. Eternal return is the image of the incessant change. What returns is not the Same

⁴⁸ The first three paradoxes are 1) contemporaneity of the past with the present it was, 2) coexistence of the past with the present in relation to which it has passed, and 3) pre-existence of the past (DR, 110–113; see Faulkner 2004 and Williams 2011).

but the Dissimilar. This means that only change is truly constant, only time remains constant, as the eternal form of change. In relation to the two syntheses, eternal return disrupts the continuity they create⁴⁹. It breaks the continuity of the passive subject by exposing it to its internal difference, by forcing it to repeat, in the hidden way, as something different than what it was before. Repetition in the eternal return is not continuity, but “the dissolution of all preliminary identities” (DR, 260).

At this point, I will discuss Deleuze’s ideas of internal difference and repetition in relation to a classic problem of identity: Theseus’s ship⁵⁰. According to the story, the ship of the mythological Greek hero was left to rot on a beach. To repair the damage, the ship’s planks were taken out one by one and replaced with new ones until each part of the ship had been exchanged. The philosophical problem arises when we ask is the ship still the same, or in other words, does it have the same identity as it did in the beginning? If not, at which point does it change its identity? For Deleuze, the identity of the ship is an effect of internal difference and the hidden repetition linked to it.

We can first think about the ship as it is rotting on the beach. The system of the ship is a complex system of different contraction-contemplations. Its parts have been contracted together by the shipbuilders. For instance, each plank has been moved to its place and attached by hammer blows and other means. Further, the particular objects are contractions of materials. For example, nails are contracted minerals, which have undergone changes such as being heated (relaxation, becoming instable) and being cast (contraction, becoming more stable). Even the materials of the parts are contractions, such as the iron of the nail is a contraction of molecules. All in all, the ship is a complex system of contemplation-contractions.

What’s more, as the ship persists in time, its composition is in a slow process of relaxation. The ship as an object, is itself a contraction-contemplation, a synthesis of habit, which has its own rhythm. For instance, the molecular basis of the particular objects (e.g. plank and nails) becomes less stable as erosion slowly decomposes the wood. When the wood gives in, the contraction-contemplation, which held it in place is relaxed—eventually the plank might fall off and the

⁴⁹ Daniela Voss stresses “that the subject or rather subjective structures are something that emerge, transform, dissolve and are always renewed through the temporal syntheses” (Voss 2013, 251).

⁵⁰ For a general discussion of the puzzle, see Lowe 2009, 25–28.

composition of the system of the ship altered. In other words, the ship's synthesis of habit progresses towards a relaxation, and this effectuates its deterioration.

For Deleuze, this process of decay is due to the ship's internal difference. On the material level, the ship repeats itself as perceptually the same from one moment to another. The internal difference drives the contraction-contemplation of the ship to perpetuate hidden repetitions, small changes leading to its slow decay. This is the ship's eternal return, as it returns as different. As the ship is in the midst of its own eternal return, the ship is in a slow process of decay, as its syntheses are progression towards a relaxation.

Now we can turn to the original puzzle. For Deleuze, there is no fundamental difference between the decay of the ship we examined above and the process of repairing the ship. The processes unravel at different rhythms. For instance, a renovator removes an entire plank, whereas decay would take years to go through it. The way the ship changes is also different. As the ship decays, it is wholly deteriorated. In the case of renovation, the composition of the ship is renewed, and its condition ameliorated. No matter, the same slow change, decay, in its composition necessarily continues even after repairing it. However, in both processes, the changes do not result from the identity of the ship. They result from the internal difference of the ship, and the hidden repetitions it endures⁵¹.

In this way, the original paradox only refers to a similar process of change observed on the level of human perception: the exchange of individual planks one at a time. However, on the sub-representational level, we see that even after renovation, the ship is still in the same process of change. However, the rhythm of the contractions might be altered if the new planks would be made of another kind of wood, for instance. The process of the dissolution of the identity of the ship remains constant, and as such, the puzzle about its identity only covers the more fundamental play of internal difference and hidden repetition.

⁵¹ This is more straightforward when erosion and decay enact the changes. However, even when human renovators work on the ship, they always proceed to modify the ship in some way. They take one element of the whole and replace it with a new part. In 2.2. we are going to discuss virtual Ideas. Here, we would need to refer to the ship's virtual Idea, as a virtual multiplicity containing all the possible states of the system. This means that the virtual Idea of the ship would already contain all the possible changes the renovators would be able to effectuate. As such, the renovation would be an actualization of the virtual Idea of the ship—an actualization in which it would progress towards the amelioration of its condition.

A similar puzzle pertains to human (and non-human) subjects as well. The molecules of a human are slowly recycled with those found in nutrients. According to an urban legend (we can assume valid for the sake of a thought experiment), every seven years, all molecules in a human would have been exchanged with others and there would be left no molecules that composed the human seven years ago⁵². This poses an analogous problem to the ship of Theseus.

For Deleuze, the human, as a passive subject would be constituted as a complex network of different syntheses of habit, contraction-contemplations. As we have seen, these passive syntheses of time would constitute, due to their perceptual side, the primordial passive receptivity. Due to their organic side, they would constitute the organic composition of the passive subject. As such, the system of the passive subject would be subject to a slow change, the exchange of the molecules making it up. This would be a result of the hidden repetition engendered by its internal difference.

In this chapter, I introduced Deleuze's motivation for a conception of internal difference and hidden repetition connected to it. The puzzle of the ship of Theseus highlighted how a classic problem of metaphysics finds a novel solution with Deleuze's philosophy of difference. We have also seen that time, as the form of change, functions as the internal difference of thinking⁵³—something which I will explore in more depth in chapter 4. Additionally, we saw how Deleuze puts his notion of time to use in proposing three syntheses of time, which constitute the production and disruption of the passive subject.

2. The Ontological Scheme of Difference and Repetition

In the everyday, human subjects encounter persistent objects, which remain constant from one moment to the next. In the previous chapter, we saw how Deleuze's internal difference, time as the form of change, engenders continuity *via* two syntheses of time. However, what we saw was a

⁵² If we would not accept presupposing the legend about the period of seven years to be valid, we could assume that a significant amount of the constituting molecular material of humans would be recycled in a period of X years. This would no longer be analogous to the original puzzle of Theseus's ship, but could work as a similar puzzle about personal identity.

⁵³ Daniela Voss sums up the importance of Deleuze's philosophy of difference in a similar fashion: "The task will be to establish a concept of difference and to restore difference to being and thought. Difference in being operates as the individuating force of nature, while difference in thought implies the fracture of the thinking subject, which is the necessary genetic conditions for the '*geniality* of thinking.'" (Voss 2013, 21.)

sort of preliminary sketch of a solution—centred around the concepts of internal difference and hidden repetition. The real ontological scheme of *Difference and Repetition* utilizes novel concepts we are going to introduce in this chapter.

This time, explaining persisting objects revolves around Deleuze's conception of the process of difference $\frac{t}{c}$ iation⁵⁴. This clarifies Deleuze's novel philosophy of difference. First, he is going to elaborate on “intensity” and a “variation in the virtual Idea” as two “figures” of the internal difference. Second, the persistence and transformation of objects of experience gets a unified description through Deleuze's process of difference $\frac{t}{c}$ iation—what the three syntheses of time described in the preceding chapter. In this way, difference $\frac{t}{c}$ iation exhibits both repetitions, material and hidden, and a double description of internal difference.

Before introducing and justifying my interpretation of Deleuze's ontological scheme, I provide an overall picture for expository purposes. Deleuze writes that all objects have two sides: an actual side, and a virtual side (DR, 358). Deleuze calls the objects we can experience *actual*; they exist and can be given to subjects in experience. This actual “side” of objects is made up of extension and qualities we can perceive (DR 286, see also DR, 188–9). It is the actual object with its persisting characteristics which cover over the flux of change.

A “virtual Idea” is the other “half” of the object (DR, 358). As a first approximation, the virtual Idea exists in a non-actual way (it exists but is not present to the object), and it contains all the possible changes of the system made up by the object (see Somers-Hall 2013, 151). Because it contains all the possible transformations of the system, it is another figure of internal difference (see 2.2. and 2.3. below for my interpretation). For example, a book can withstand certain movements: it can be opened, each page turned, and so on. These constitute a series of different organizations the book as a system can go through. Deleuze's virtual Idea of the book would contain all the possible states the book can go through, meaning the movements and qualitative changes it can undergo.

⁵⁴ As I outlined in the introduction, this chapter is like a repetition of the first one—very much in Deleuze's sense because what is repeated, is repeated as different from what it was. I note here that, for the purposes of this Master's thesis, both chapters are necessary, because Deleuze uses terminology from both when he exposes his notion of transcendent thinking.

The actual side of the object contains what we normally take an object to be. With its virtual side, Deleuze wants to include in the object a virtual set of the possible states it can go through. Yet, what is the reason of the appearance of the object's actual side? Why does the object go through a specific change contained in its virtual side? Deleuze accounts for these by a third ontological order: intensity. Preliminarily, intensity is a non-extensive and non-qualified order of intensive differences (for example, a difference in temperature). Intensive difference functions as the internal difference of systems. They engender change in processes. For example, when a kettle of water reaches its boiling point, an intensive difference instigates the vaporization of the liquid, or a change in the system of the boiling water. Intensity gives rise to spatiotemporal dynamisms, which in turn give rise to all extension and all quality, or the actual objects we encounter⁵⁵.

Interpretation of the nature and relation of these three orders (virtual, actual, intensity) has diverged in the secondary literature. Manuel DeLanda takes these registers to mean “the three ontological dimensions which constitute the Deleuzian world” (DeLanda 2013, 55). DeLanda emphasizes the ontological nature of these distinctions, how they are mind-independent traits we can attribute to reality. John Protevi has a similar view as it is for him, a “tripartite ontological scheme” (Protevi 2013, 4). However, Deleuze does not himself write about ontological dimensions. Deleuze himself uses order (“ordre”) to refer to these (DR, 286). I am going to use ‘order’ to refer to these three interconnected terms and ontological scheme to describe Deleuze’s entire picture. Using the word ‘dimension’ risks the danger of separating these orders from each other and leads to connotations of dogmatic or pre-critical philosophy⁵⁶.

For Deleuze, it is important to avoid certain pitfalls, some of which he has attributed to preceding philosophers. This means that he needs to account for the constitution and progression of the two sides of the object. He does this by introducing the process of “differentiation”.

⁵⁵ In the conclusion of *Difference and repetition* Deleuze portrays the whole ontological scheme of the book through the concept of “simulacrum” as the “system where the different relates to the different by difference itself.” (DR, 355). Emphasising the concept of simulacrum achieves two things, First, it positions the ontological scheme of the book in terms of the overturning of Platonism Deleuze advocates: making the changing diversity primordial in relation to essence (e.g. DR, 95). Second, it emphasises representation as the object of critique in the book (DR 355–6). To simplify matters, I leave out the concept of simulacrum from my close examination.

⁵⁶ The Kantian background of *Difference and Repetition*, although important for me, is not my focal point in this Master’s thesis. We can note the opening of the fifth chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, where Deleuze relates intensity to Kantian noumena, as opposed to phenomena it gives rise to (DR, 286–7).

First, virtual Ideas cannot be like immutable platonic essences residing in another realm—Deleuze needs to account for the constitution of virtual Ideas. The process of “differentiation”, with a ‘t’, refers to the way virtual Ideas are fully determined *via* a process, as each Idea arises from a problematic field. The virtual order of reality does not precede reality itself, but they do precede the actual objects found in it.

Second, the progression of objects cannot be accounted only on actual terms; the virtual Ideas describe all the possible states and mutations a system can go through. Deleuze refers to actualisation of a virtual idea as “differentiation”, with a ‘c’. As differences arise in actual being, such as branching of a tree as it grows, the virtual Idea is actualised in being.

Third, intensity accounts for the changes a system undergoes. The process of differentiation progresses in an intensive field of individuation. Intensity gives rise to spatiotemporal dynamisms or individuals, which themselves give rise to actual extension and quality. According to Deleuze, the differentiation of virtual Ideas is “determined” by intensive differences in this field of individuation. Through the process of differentiation, the virtual Ideas are actualised, and according to Deleuze, intensity “expresses” virtual ideas in their actualisation. Together, these form what Deleuze calls “differentiation”. At the end of the chapter I will examine John Roffe’s (2015) interpretation of differentiation as a form of thinking.

2.1. Intensity and the Actual

The order of intensity fulfils two functions in Deleuze’s ontology. First, it works as the instigator of change. Intensive difference is another figure of internal difference and change and transformation originate from these intensive differences. (DR, 286; see also Clisby 2017, 241.) As changes and transformations underlie all persistent objects of experience, they have their ground in intensive differences. In other words, the actual emerges from intensity. Second, as the “being of the sensible,” all perceptible qualities and extensions are given to us through intensity (DR, 188–9; see Smith 1996, 39). For example, two different colours are perceived as exemplifying different intensities of the colour—one flower can be more yellow than another. Here, I am going to refer to the first conception of intensity as intensive difference, situated in the intensive order of intensive differences, and to the second, as sensible intensity. However,

sensible intensity “refers” to intensive differences of the ontological order, because they are engendered by them⁵⁷ (DR, 294; DR 188–9)⁵⁸.

As an ontological realm, intensity is the “order of difference”. (DR, 286) and “difference in itself” (DR, 187; see Protevi 2013, 4). This order is itself not extensive nor qualified (DR, 310). In this chapter, we are not going to attempt an exhaustive interpretation of intensity as an ontological order⁵⁹. First, we are going to start by distinguishing further intensive difference from sensible intensity. Second, we will see how sensible intensity refers to the ontological order of intensity. Third, we are going to turn to how change originates from intensive differences—how intensive differences function as internal differences. Fourth, we will see how actual objects arise from the intensive order.

Differences in intensity or intensive differences come in many guises, e.g., as a difference in temperature or pressure (DR, 286). For instance, the temperature of 20 degrees Celsius is less intense than that of 30 degrees Celsius: there is an intensive difference between these two states. However, when we point to this intensive difference, we are not pointing to the 10 degrees Celsius we get when we subtract the numerical measurement of the less intense temperature from the more intense one—this is only a numerical representation of the intensive difference. According to Deleuze, we are pointing to a difference, which resides in the order of intensity “which pre-exists all quality as well as all extension” (Deleuze 2003b, 135)⁶⁰.

Intensive difference is distinct from differences we find in extensity and quantity. Quantities can be divided and added. A quantity, like ten pebbles, can be divided into two sets of five. An extensity, such as one litre of water, can be divided up. They are made up of the same “stuff” as the results of our additions or subtractions. We can even portray a difference in quantity, or

⁵⁷ Deleuze does not always specify which form of intensity he is referring to. His insistence on remaining equivocal in this distinction seems to arise from a decision to highlight the interrelatedness of these two senses. Intensity as an ontological order is imperceptible but it gives rise to sensible qualities, which are given *via* sensible intensities. Indeed, later in 4.1., I am going to discuss how Deleuze maintains that when we perceive sensible intensity, we are also, in a very specific oblique sense specified in 4.1., sensing the ontological order of intensity.

⁵⁸ “[...] renvoyer à un ordre impliqué de différences constituantes” (DR, 294).

⁵⁹ Deleuze writes that intensity is an “intensive space without other qualification [un espace intensif sans autre qualification]” (DR, 310). He also refers to intensity as a “depth is, as a heterogeneous dimension (ultimate and original), the matrix of extension”, and as “space as intensive quantity: the pure *spatium*” (DR, 296; see Clisby 2017, 249). However, I do not have the space here to give a detailed interpretation of these spatial characterisations of intensity as an ontological order.

⁶⁰ “[...] préexiste à toute qualité comme à toute extension” (Deleuze 2003b, 135).

extensity, in the same terms—difference between 5 litres of water, and 2 litres, is a difference of 3 litres. However, intensity cannot be divided up or added without changing its kind (DR, 306). We do not get the sensible intensity of 60 degrees Celsius by combining the sensible intensity of 30 degrees Celsius with another 30 degrees⁶¹. The intensive state of 30 degrees differs in kind from 60 degrees, because it gives rise to other qualities. 30 degrees can be experienced as pleasant, whereas 60 degrees would be experienced as too hot. This difference in sensible intensity points towards the constituting intensive difference.

The sensible intensity experienced in quality “refers to an implicated order of constituting differences,” that is, to intensity as an ontological order (DR, 294; DR, 188–9)⁶². This is, because all extensions and qualities result from intensity (DR, 327). Intensity is the “form of difference as the reason of the sensible” (DR, 287). For Deleuze, the ontological order of intensive differences cannot itself be perceived, because it has no extension, nor any quality⁶³. However, quality and extension arise from intensive differences (as we will see in more detail below), and sensible intensity points towards the imperceptible world of intensive differences.

Intensive difference, or internal difference, engenders change (DR, 286; see Bryant 2008, 238)⁶⁴. Take an example from classical thermodynamics⁶⁵. Imagine an airtight box with two compartments, which contain the same gas at two different temperatures. When a sliding wall is opened and the two gases come into interaction, they will mix and the resulting gas will reach a temperature in between the temperatures of the two separated gases. At the outset, there was an intensive difference between the two gases—this was what instigated the process of mixing.

⁶¹ One might object that thermodynamics does explain things such as transitions from 45 degrees Celsius to 90 degrees. However, with this objection, one misses the point. When we talk about the intensive difference between 50 degrees Celsius and 90 degrees Celsius, we are talking about a difference which we sense through a sensible intensity, namely, the feeling of warmth. This sensible intensity points beyond, to the intensive difference, which engenders the quality.

⁶² “[...] renvoyer à un ordre impliqué de différences constituantes” (DR, 294). Implication refers to how the intensive space is distributed, or implicated, in all actual objects.

⁶³ Dale Clisby writes that “Intensity lies beyond experience, as a *transcendental principle*” (Clisby 2017, 250).

⁶⁴ Levi Bryant refers to an intensive difference as an “ordinal difference” (Bryant 2008, 238). By this Bryant wants to emphasize intensive difference as marking a threshold at which something happens. If we take the example of the boiling point of water, we can note that the boiling point is not exhausted when we bring one contingent pot of water to boil. The boiling point can be reached elsewhere, and the point marks the threshold in which a process of change, namely vaporization of the water begins.

⁶⁵ Deleuze discusses classical thermodynamics extensively in the fifth chapter of *Difference and Repetition* and criticizes it for neglecting the intensive difference in favour of the state of equilibrium in the end state (DR, see Clisby 2017 for an in-depth exposition of Deleuze’s engagement with thermodynamics).

Intensive difference, difference in intensity, works as the internal difference of systems and brings about changes (DR, 286).

Deleuze offers a detailed description of how intensive difference instigates changes in systems. I will go over it briefly, because the details of the theory are tangential to my purposes in this Master's thesis. First, there are two disparate intensive "series", which enter into communication *via* a "dark precursor"⁶⁶ (Deleuze 2002b, 135–6). An example of Deleuze is a strike of lightning. To begin, we have two series of the states of electrical potential in two clouds. (DR, 156.) The difference in the clouds is repeated from one moment to the other. There is a difference in the intensity of the electric charge between them: an intensive difference between the series (ibid.). A dark precursor puts the two series into communication, and at the moment of their joining, a phenomena appears: a strike of lightning (ibid.). In this way, Deleuze describes how intensive differences instigate changes in systems, or progression in perceptible objects.

However, how does intensity give rise to actual objects? According to Deleuze, every actual thing "refers" to a conditioning inequality, that is, to an intensive difference. The order of the actual is that of the phenomenon: extensity, quantity and quality, and these refer to the intensive order as what which conditions them. (DR 286; DR, 188–9.)⁶⁷ The actual is in fact based on intensity. "Everything that happens or appears is the correlative of orders of difference: difference of level, of temperature, of pressure, or tension, of potential, *difference of intensity*" (DR, 286; Bowden 2017, 236.) The actual correlates with intensity. The diversity we perceive is engendered by the imperceptible world of intensive differences⁶⁸.

Again, Deleuze has a complex notion of how intensity correlates with the actual, and for my purposes, a cursory reading is satisfactory. According to him, intensity "expresses itself

⁶⁶ The dark precursor seems *ad hoc* here. However, for my purposes, we can think of it as a posited mechanism which has a function: enabling the communication between the two series.

⁶⁷ Deleuze refrains from using the concepts of cause and causality. This is a complex matter but one difficulty Deleuze seems to find in causal explanations is the danger of determinism. Instead, Deleuze chooses to talk about signals between different levels and systems, or as in this passage, about the sufficient reason for something (see Bryant 2008, 226–7).

⁶⁸ According to Deleuze, intensive difference is never cancelled out in intensity itself, but only in the actual, it is covered over by the qualities and extensities it gives rise to (DR, 294). To align this properly to an interpretation, we would have to examine more closely Deleuze's claims about the ontological order of difference as an intensive space, which reaches beyond this Master's thesis.

immediately in the spatiotemporal dynamisms of the base” (DR, 316)⁶⁹. Deleuze lists as examples “stirring of space, holes of time, pure syntheses of velocities, direction and rhythms.” These dynamisms give rise to all quality and extension (Deleuze 2002b, 134, 136). Deleuze calls “larval subjects” the “individuals”, which are directly under actual objects (Deleuze 2002b, 136). All these aspects make up the intensive field of individuation, which at bottom is engendered by of intensive difference (Deleuze 2002b, 135 and DR 316–7). So, directly from the order of intensity arise pure spatial dynamisms, which engender extension and qualities *via* individuals or larval subjects⁷⁰.

In this way, change and actual objects originate from the ontological order of intensive differences⁷¹. Extension and quality arise from this intensive field of individuation. As all quality is given through sensible intensity, it functions as the “being of the sensible”.

2.2. Virtual Ideas

If intensive difference is the instigator of change, is there something that orients or guides the engendered process? For this role, Deleuze introduces the notion of a virtual Idea⁷², or a virtual multiplicity. A virtual Idea is actualized in the process of differentiation, where it orients the changes the system of the actual object undergoes (DR, 237; we will look in more detail at the actualization of an Idea below in 2.3.).

The virtual, as an ontological order, is distinct from the possible (DR, 247–8, 272–3; Deleuze 2002b, 141; see Voss 2013, 126). First, when the possible is *realized*, it becomes ‘real’. To begin with, the possible does not have any reality in itself. This leads to the problematic view, where the production of the real becomes a “pure arisal [surgissement pure]” (DR, 272). The virtual, however, is fully real, in its own modality. For Deleuze, the objects we encounter in experience

⁶⁹ “[...] s’exprime immédiatement dans les dynamismes spatio-temporels de base” (DR, 316).

⁷⁰ This links Deleuze’s ontological scheme to the syntheses of time we discussed in 1.3 (see DR, 296). The spatiotemporal dynamisms make up the larval subjects, which should be interpreted as describing the same as the passive subjects produced by the two syntheses of time: habit and memory.

⁷¹ Sean Bowden writes “[a]ctual entities are ‘metastable’ or intensive individuals. They in some sense *are* their constitutive intensive differences, and may be implicated in other, ongoing or future intensive processes. Nevertheless, insofar as intensity is in itself ‘uncancellable’ with regard to the actual extended and qualified forms that explicate it, intensity is something other than actual.” (Bowden 2017, 236). I agree that actual objects have their intensive reasons, and in this sense, have an intensive basis.

⁷² Deleuze’s Ideas have their forebearers in Kant’s transcendental Ideas of reason, as Deleuze makes clear in the opening of the fourth chapter of *Difference and Repetition* (DR, 220–1, see also Voss 2013, 145–6 and Smith 2006). Julius Telivuo (2012) investigated the Kantian background of Deleuze’s Ideas in his Master’s thesis (Telivuo, 2012).

are *actual*. By *actual*, Deleuze means that something is real or existing and that they are present for being experienced. The virtual itself is something that does exist too, but it is not actual—is not directly experienced. In this way, the possible is not the counterpart of the virtual, but the actual is (DR, 247–8; Deleuze 2002 b, 141). Second, if we were to explain the progression of actual processes *via* the concept of possibility, this would have to be done by limitation (DR, 278; see Voss 2013, 127). If what actualises itself was possible, many more things *were* possible to begin with. Actualisation would have proceeded by eliminating the states that were not actualised. With the concept of the virtual, Deleuze conceptualises the progression of actual processes as a creation (DR, 278).

The virtual Idea is not actual, but it orients the progression of processes (DR, 237). However, what is a virtual Idea and how does it relate to an actual object? First, a virtual Idea does not resemble the object whose actualisation it orients (Deleuze 2002b, 140). In *The Method of Dramatisation*, Deleuze separates succinctly two constituents of virtual Ideas, and they correspond with, without resembling, two aspects of an actualised object. On the one hand, are the differential elements, which are not actual, nor sensible, nor do they have a function—indeed, they are only determined by the reciprocal or differential relations they have with each other (Deleuze 2002b, 139; DR 237; see Bowden 2017, 228–9). In an actualised object, these elements “incarnate in kinds or separated qualities” (Deleuze 2002b, 140; see Bowden 2017, 228–9). The differential elements actualize in qualities and kinds found in actual objects, such as colour, hardness, and so on. On the other hand, are the singularities, or ideal events made up of the differential elements. They actualise themselves in extensities. (Deleuze 2002b, 139–40.) These singularities correspond to parts and organizations of objects—for instance, the leg of a chair corresponds to the singularity found in its Idea. In sum, the Idea is made up of differential elements and virtual singularities. These correspond, but do not resemble their actualizations in actual objects.

The gene is one of Deleuze’s examples of virtual Ideas. Genes contain the hereditary information of an animal and they guide the way proteins are synthesised during the lifecycle of an organism—they orient the growth of an individual organism. Genes have their physical manifestation, but for Deleuze, the gene as a virtual Idea is not the same thing. The bits of information in the genetic makeup of an organism are elements, which do not have meaning

separated from the whole they belong to. They gain their role from the relations they hold among each other: “genes express differential elements that characterise the global manner of an organism, and also play the role of remarkable points in a double process of reciprocal and complete determination” (DR, 240; see Clisby 2017, 255; Bryant 2008, 75)⁷³. In the actual organism, differential elements correspond to the qualities and kinds that make up of the organism. The remarkable points refer to the singularities, which correspond to the organization of the organism.

The gene as a virtual Idea is actualized in one member of the species but finds other actualisations in all the other members of the species. This is indeed a further distinctive feature of a virtual Idea. The differential relations between the constituents of the virtual Idea “should actualise itself in diverse spatiotemporal *relations*, at the same time when, its *elements* incarnate themselves actually in *terms* and varied forms. In this way, the Idea defines itself as a structure.” (DR, 237.)⁷⁴ Idea, as a virtual structure, must be actualised in many actual objects.

Next, I will discuss Deleuze’s reading of the differential calculus, since it highlights how the relations between the differential elements constitute a “figure” of internal difference. However, the differential calculus itself is nothing but a “technical model” for Deleuze and it showcases the process of differentiation. Other kinds of models arise from different milieus. (DR, 285.) Here, I am following here Daniela Voss’s (2013) exposition of the differential calculus.

The basic idea of the differential calculus is that we can investigate the rate of change of a given function by differentiating the function (called the primitive function) at that given point. The differential relation $\frac{dy}{dx}$ gives us the rate of change at that point. (Voss 2013, 122.) In geometric terms, the $\frac{dy}{dx}$ gives us the gradient of the tangent drawn from that point of the curve. The $\frac{dy}{dx}$ describes the quality of the curve, is it, for instance, rising or falling. (ibid.)

⁷³ “[...] les gènes expriment des éléments différentiels qui caractérisent aussi bien de manière globale un organisme, et qui jouent le rôle de points remarquables dans un double processus de détermination réciproque et complete” (DR, 240).

⁷⁴ “[...] un *rapport* différentiel doit s’actualiser dans des *relations* spatio-temporelles diverses, en même temps que ses *éléments* s’incarnent actuellement dans des *termes* et formes variée. L’idée se définit ainsi comme structure.” (DR, 237.)

At this point, we can recognize that the differential relation, $\frac{dy}{dx}$, manifests Deleuze's conception of a differential relation in a Virtual Idea. In the case of the curve, the $\frac{dy}{dx}$ does not refer to a particular point—it is defined through a relation between points. The $\frac{dy}{dx}$ describes the quality of the curve at that point, whether it is falling, for instance. In the same way, the differential element corresponds to a quality actualized in the actual object.

Now, where the curve reaches a local maximum or a minimum, the $\frac{dy}{dx}$ gives us a gradient of zero, meaning the tangent drawn from that point is horizontal to the axis. Such a point is called a singularity or a singular point. (Voss 2013, 122–3.) These points mark instances where the behaviour of the curve changes remarkably: for example, the rising curve reaches its local maximum and begins to fall, after that singular point. This corresponds to the way a singularity in the virtual Idea correlates with extension. As the singular points of a curve denote changes in the curve's behaviour, the singular points of the virtual Idea describe the way the actual object is extended in space. This means that the singular points guide the topological features actualized in actual objects.

However, the differential calculus can highlight the way Deleuze sees virtual Ideas as directing the actualization of an actual object, that is the process of it persisting and transforming. Daniela Voss discusses how Karl Weierstrass introduced a method which can describe the behaviour of the curve in the neighbourhood of a single point on a finite continuous range of the curve by giving an infinite power series of derivatives on the single point. According to Voss, Deleuze assumes that we can create the primitive function through Weierstrass's method out of the singular points. (Voss 2013, 122–3.) This means that, if we know the differential relations ($\frac{dy}{dx}$) of the singular points of the curve, we could produce the curve from them. For Deleuze, this is analogous to how the differential elements and singularities of the virtual Idea can generate each possible state of the system they describe.

As the most important takeaway from the example of the differential calculus, is that the differential relation $\frac{dy}{dx}$, provides an example of a difference, which is not representational. It does not represent a particular point, and as such, it only describes it as a reciprocal relation between

two terms—that is, as a differential difference. As the $\frac{dy}{dx}$ escapes representing a certain point, it is only the differential relation associated with the generation of that point. This means that the differential difference here, is another figure of internal difference. In general, the differential relations, which make up the singularities of the Idea, are “figures” of internal difference (DR, 315, see Smith 2012, 83).

Deleuze is clear that the role of differential calculus is illuminating, but mathematics is not fundamental: the calculus is “but a mathematical instrument” (DR, 235). Daniela Voss stresses that differential calculus is “a specific mathematical tool that entirely belongs to mathematics” (Voss 2013, 200). In fact, Deleuze states that “[i]f the Idea is the differential of thinking, there is a corresponding differential calculus for each dialectic Idea that it incarnates” (DR, 235).⁷⁵ The differential calculus does not provide an exhaustive model of Deleuze’s ontology, but it does provide an example of the functioning of a virtual Idea.⁷⁶

So, a virtual Idea is a pure multiplicity made up of differential relations (DR, 236; see Voss 2013, 145). An Idea’s elements should not have any sensible form or conceptual signification, nor a designated function. They are virtual, so they are not actual. (DR, 237.) Only through the *actualization* of a virtual Idea can we perceive it. This means that we cannot sense the elements of the Idea, nor it as a whole, because it does not belong to the order of actual and is not thereby sensible.

In the secondary literature, the interpretation of the virtual has led to some misconceptions (for a review, see, e.g., Clisby 2017, 251–255). For example, Peter Hallward mistakenly equates intensity and the virtual⁷⁷. In *Out of this World* (2006), Hallward takes the virtual to be “more real” than the other ontological orders, because of its status as that which guides actualization. Hallward critiques Deleuze for rendering actual objects mere vehicles for virtual Ideas to act

⁷⁵ “Si l’Idée est la différentielle de la pensée, il y a un calcul différentiel correspondant à chaque Idée” (DR, 235).

⁷⁶ This sense is evident when Daniel W. Smith writes that “The calculus is a symbolism for the exploration of existence” (Smith 2012, 83). On a related note, Levy Bryant grants prominence to mathematical intuition, because he sees that mathematical intuition has the capacity to produce its objects from nothing. This is important for Bryant because the finitude of the subject is overcome, as the mathematical intuition extends its powers to infinity. Thus bridging the gap between finite and infinite for the subject. (Bryant 2008, 10.) Bryant seems to outline a role for mathematics more like that granted by Quentin Meillassoux in *After Finitude* (2006), and I do not see Deleuze proposing a methodological signpost like this.

⁷⁷ James Williams also seems to conflate the virtual and intensity (Williams 2003, 8).

through. (Hallward 2006, 38). This approach fails in several respects. First, Deleuze clearly separates these two orders. Second, it misreads the nuanced way intensity, the virtual and actual influence one another (which I will discuss in the next subchapter). Third, Hallward's criticism is misguided, as none of the three orders is more "real" than the others—they are three orders of existence. Dale Clisby summarizes succinctly the distinction between the virtual and the intensive as follows: "just as the virtual is said to be *real without being actual*, the intensive environmental present could similarly be described as *real without being extensive*" (Clisby 2017, 256). The three ontological orders are to be separated, but they all are real, nonetheless⁷⁸.

In summary, the virtual Idea is a virtual multiplicity made up of differential elements, and singularities. These correspond, without resembling, to the qualities, kinds and extension of actual objects and organisms. As these differential elements only find themselves reciprocally determined, without representing anything actual, they contain a differential difference, another figure of Deleuze's internal difference. Henry Somers-Hall sums this up excellently: "the differentials of the Idea together specify all of the possible states of affairs that a given system can exhibit" (Somers-Hall 2013, 151).

2.3. Differen^t_ciation and Objectal Thinking

We have discussed the two halves of Deleuze's conception of objects: their actual and virtual sides. We understand that intensive difference functions as the instigator of change and it lies behind all extension and quality. However, we do not yet understand how the actual processes progress. As Deleuze writes, "we must form the complex notion of differen^t_ciation to designate the integrity or the whole of the object" (DR 270).⁷⁹

As a first approximation of this process, differentiation with a 't' refers to the way the virtual Idea is fully determined: each Idea arises from a problematic field. Differenciation, with a 'c', means

⁷⁸ Here, I align myself along with Clisby and other similar interpretation. Sean Bowden has argued that, as intensity is the reason of all actual, it actually has ontological primacy, and thus taking it on par with the virtual and the actual as ontological orders should be avoided (Bowden 2017, 236–7). However, even though I agree with the prevalent role of intensive differences, I think that both intensive differences and virtual Ideas play out the role of internal difference and repetition in *Difference and Repetition*.

⁷⁹ "[...] il faut former la notion complexe de différen^t_ciation pour désigner l'intégrité ou l'intégralité de l'objet" (DR, 270).

that a virtual Idea actualises itself, as differences arise in being. Actualization happens according to the differential elements and singularities making up the constitution of the virtual Idea. In Deleuze's words, differenciation refers to "at the same time the state of the differential relation in the Idea, or the virtual multiplicity, and the state of series, qualitative and extensive, in which they actualise themselves as they differentiate" (DR, 316; see Voss 2013, 194)⁸⁰. Differenciation concerns on the one hand how the virtual Idea, the virtual side of the object, is constituted (differentiation), and how actual thing, the actual side of the object, develops (differentiation)⁸¹.

We can begin with, differentiation, with a 't', because it is prior to differentiation. As Deleuze writes, "It is always in relation to a differentiated problem, to the conditions of differentiated problems, that a differentiation of species and parts operates, (DR, 267)⁸². Differentiation concerns the production of Ideas. Deleuze introduces differentiation by relating it to his ideas of problems and solutions: "The problem, as the object of the Idea, is found rather on the side of events, affectations and accidents, not alongside theorematic essence" (DR, 243; see Voss 2013, 150)⁸³. Each Idea has a problem as its object. These are something concrete, as opposed to "theorematics essences". Deleuze needs to sidestep the error, where essences form a reality above actual existence. Differentiation connects Ideas to the actual, as they arise from concrete and actual circumstances (events).

⁸⁰ "[...] à la fois l'état des rapports différentiels dans l'Idée ou la multiplicité virtuelle, et l'état des séries, qualitative et extensive, où ils s'actualisent en se différenciant" (Deleuze 2013 (1968), 316).

⁸¹ To be precise, Deleuze's conception includes the intensive field of individuation (see 2.1.), which can be seen as the intensive "space" in which all other aspects processes progress (DR 310). At times Deleuze denotes the entire complexity of his conception as indi-differenciation (e.g. Deleuze 2003b, 143). Another aspect Deleuze treats is the way intensity, *via* the spatiotemporal dynamisms it gives rise to, "dramatizes" the virtual Ideas, or determines their actualisation (DR, 316, Deleuze 2003b, 129, 137). To include this, Deleuze also uses indi-drama-differenciation (e.g. in DR 317). Both aspects concern the intricate relationship between the three ontological registers, and for my purposes here, differenciation is enough precision, because we need to understand virtual Ideas and their actualisation in what follows concerning Deleuze's conception of transcendent thinking. However, intensity functions as another image of the internal difference we encountered in the first chapter, and for this reason, I have felt it needed to be presented in this chapter. Intensity will also have a role in transcendent thinking.

⁸² "C'est toujours par rapport à un problème différencié, à des conditions de problèmes différenciées, qu'une différenciation d'espèces et de parties s'opère, comme correspondant aux cas de solution du problème. C'est toujours un champ problématique qui conditionne une différenciation à l'intérieur du milieu où il s'incarne." (DR, 267.)

⁸³ "Le problème, en tant qu'objet de l'Idée, se trouve du côté des événements, des affections, des accidents plutôt que de l'essence théorématique" (DR, 242–3).

Deleuze discusses the virtual Idea of the eye as a response to a problem (DR, 172, note 1.). The eye has developed evolutionally in relation to a certain problem: how to navigate in the organisms' environment. Fruitful interaction with the environment demanded the ability to, for instance, move about to search for nourishment. As light was present in the environment, it was beneficial to develop an organ which could utilize it for navigation. And from this problematic field, the virtual Idea of the eye arose, from where it became differentiated.

Second, differentiation, with a 'c', is the actualization of a virtual Idea in the actual. The differential elements of the Idea actualize in the qualities and kinds of actual objects, whereas the singularities in the topological features of extension of the actual objects. (DR, 272; see Bowden 2017, 226.) Differentiation can be highlighted by Deleuze's example of the gene (DR, 276–8). As an organism grows, the genes as a virtual Idea orient the way it progresses. For instance, the colour of a human individual's eyes depends on the genes passed on from their parents. As the embryo develops and the eyes are formed, the specific genes responsible for their colour are actualised in each cell of the iris. The differential elements of the Idea actualize themselves in the eye colour, whereas the shape of the eye is governed by the singularities of the Idea. However, Deleuze is clear that the differential relations do not resemble the actual relations they actualize through (Deleuze 2002b, 140). If the differential relations would resemble the actual extensities and qualities, they would be reducible to their actualisation.

The intensive field of individuation (see 2.1.) provides the framework for the development of differentiation. As the instigator of change, intensive difference influences this process as well: “We talk about explication regarding intensity that “develops” itself, and which, precisely determines the movement of actualisation.” (DR, 316; see Bowden 2017, 228–9)⁸⁴. As intensity develops itself, it determines the movement of differentiation. Because every actualisation of a virtual Idea presupposes an intensive difference as the origin of this change, intensity determines the actualisation of the Idea. In this way, “explication” of intensity “determines the movement of actualisation”⁸⁵.

⁸⁴ “Nous parlons de différenciation par rapport à l’Idées qui s’actualise. Nous parlons d’explication par rapport à l’intensité qui se ‘développe’, et qui, précisément, détermine le mouvement d’actualisation.” (DR, 316.)

⁸⁵ There is an interpretative problem involved here. Deleuze insists that intensity determines actualisation of the virtual Idea, but at the same time, he maintains that the two orders are distinct—how do they then influence one

The process of differentiation $\frac{t}{c}$ reveals that the virtual Idea and intensive difference are in fact “two corresponding figures of difference” (DR, 315)⁸⁶. Indeed, intensive difference as the catalysator of processes is a figure of internal difference, just as the virtual Idea, as a differential multiplicity (containing all the possible variations of the system), is a figure of the internal difference. In fact, the two presuppose each other: “[i]ntensities do not express or suppose anything else, but differential relations; the individuals do not suppose anything other than Ideas” (DR, 324). In this way, we cannot have one without the other. The process of differentiation $\frac{t}{c}$ plays out “[b]etween intensity and the Idea, a flow of exchanges is established” (DR, 315). The actual object progresses between these two figures of internal difference.

Together, these figures make up Deleuze’s conception of internal difference and hidden repetition (as they were introduced in chapter 1). However, they gain their true meaning only in the process of differentiation $\frac{t}{c}$, under the form of change (time). The differential $\frac{dy}{dx}$, as a differential relation, arises from the problematic field informed by the intensive field. The difference in intensity as an internal difference provokes a change in the system. However, the virtual Idea contains the possible variations of the system, constituting another figure of internal difference. The virtual Idea actualizes itself in the process of the progression of an actual object. In this manner, we observe how the actual object repeats itself on the surface level (material repetition), but the hidden repetition of differentiation means it is continually self-differing. In this way, the process of differentiation $\frac{t}{c}$ includes a double description of Deleuze’s conception of internal difference, enveloped in a hidden repetition covered over by the material repetition of the actual object.

However, Deleuze talks about differentiation $\frac{t}{c}$ as a kind of thinking. Deleuze writes that “[e]very body, every thing, thinks and is a thought [pensée], inasmuch as, reduced to its intensive reasons

another? In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze writes that intensity “expresses” the virtual Idea (DR, 324). Sean Bowden (2017) has explored in detail the expressive relation between intensity and the virtual Idea, drawing from other works of Deleuze. However, for my purpose here, it is not needed to study in detail the expressive relation between intensity and virtual—we can be satisfied with the idea that the change inherent in the differentiation of an Idea is instigated by an intensive difference.

⁸⁶ “[...] deux figures correspondantes de la différence” (DR, 315). Deleuze also refers to an intensive difference as the Difference with a capital ‘D’ (DR, 310), that is, as the internal difference we examined in chapter one.

[raisons], it expresses⁸⁷ an Idea whose actualisation it determines” (DR, 327)⁸⁸. All actualised beings have their intensive “reasons”: they arise from the processes instigated by intensive differences on the level of intensity. In the process of differenciation, the intensive differences determine the way a virtual Idea actualises itself in the actualised object. In this sense, the intensive ground of the actualised being thinks the virtual Idea, and the actualisation the actualised being goes through, is the thought which unravels from this idea. So, differenciation, is thinking.

In his article *Objectal Human: On the Place of Psychic Systems in Difference and Repetition* (2015), John Roffe explores differenciation as thinking. He introduces a useful distinction between subjectal and objectal thought. Roffe defines subjectal as “the system composed by human thought, that is, the actual and achieved (that is individuated) noological capacities of *homo sapiens* – simply, human beings in the normal sense of the word” (Roffe 2015, 43–4). The objectal, “will concern the regime of objects and their primordial relationship with the pre-objectal field of intensive individuation” (Roffe 2015, 44). In this sense, differenciation corresponds to objectal thinking and is separated from objectal thinking (ibid.).

Deleuze also connect the conception of objectal thinking to eternal return: “The thinker, without doubt, the thinker of eternal return, is the individual, the universal individual.” (DR, 327)⁸⁹ This fairly esoteric claim has to mean that the “thinker” of eternal return is the process of differenciation. Intensity gives rise to spatiotemporal dynamisms, from which individuals arise. As I above argued, differenciation, is at bottom, Deleuze’s eternal return⁹⁰.

I began this chapter by asking how Deleuze accounts for persisting objects in our experience. As we have seen, Deleuze’s differenciation describes objects as processes. However, the relation

⁸⁷ See footnote 85 above concerning Deleuze’s use of the verb ‘express’ in this context.

⁸⁸ “Tout corps, toute chose pense et est une pensée, pour autant que, réduite à ses raisons intensives, elle exprime une Idée dont elle détermine l’actualisation” (DR, 327).

⁸⁹ “Le penseur, sans doute le penseur de l’éternel retour, est l’individu, l’universel individu” (DR, 327).

⁹⁰ As further textual evidence, later in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze returns to the idea of eternal return as a kind of thinking: “To conceive eternal return as a selective thinking [pensée], and the repetition in eternal return as a selective being, is the highest test” (DR, 381).

between the processes discussed in this chapter and the persisting objects of experiences is indeed that between a representation and its conditions. To be precise, Deleuze writes that “the two correlative aspects of *differentiation*, kinds and parties, specification and organization. They constitute the conditions of representation of things in general.” (Deleuze 2002b, 134.)⁹¹ As differentiation produces actual objects, it renders possible their representation by thinkers. At bottom, “the dynamisms [i.e. the spatiotemporal dynamisms intensity gives rise to] and their concomitants [i.e. the individuals which precede organization of actual objects], work below all the forms and qualified extensions of representation” (DR, 137)⁹². The way these spatiotemporal dynamisms work is through the process of differentiation as the actualization of a virtual Idea. This means that the objects we can think representationally are *produced* by the process of differentiation. However, in the next chapter we are going to turn to how these representations are thought—and what difficulties arise from it.

3. Empirical Thinking

Deleuze takes differentiation to be a kind of thinking: the thinking of a virtual Idea as it is actualized. Alternatively, all progressions of systems, from the formation of minerals to growth of fungi colonies, satisfy this definition of thinking. This is not what we ordinarily refer to by the concept of thinking. Usually, we refer by it to many kinds of cognitive acts of the human thinker, such as recollection of a memory, deduction, discursive thinking, and so on. It would seem most of what human psychic systems labor through each day are these kinds of operations. For Deleuze, these acts operate on the level of representation. For example, when a past experience is recalled by the subject voluntarily, this recollection is representational in character. More precisely, the past occurrence has been retained as a representation by the subject and this representation can be called back, re-presented, to the subject by the recollection of memory. For Deleuze, these representational acts of cognition are grouped together under the “empirical

⁹¹ “[...] deux aspects corrélatifs de la *différenciation* : espèce et parties, spécification et organisation. Ils constituent les conditions de la représentation des choses en général.” (Deleuze 2003b, 134.)

⁹² “[...] les dynamismes, et leurs concomitants, travaillent sous toutes les formes et les étendues qualifiées de la représentation” (DR, 137).

exercise of the faculties” (faculties being distinct capabilities of the mind⁹³) (e.g. DR, 186). I refer to them as “empirical thinking”⁹⁴.

In this chapter, I will first introduce Deleuze’s reading of Kant’s determining judgment⁹⁵ (of the type, “this is a dog”). This provides the paradigm example of empirical thinking, and an important backdrop for understanding Deleuze’s notion of a transcendent thinking (see 4.1.). I stress that evaluating the exactness of Deleuze’s reading of Kant is beyond the scope of this Master’s thesis. Second, I will introduce Deleuze’s criticism of his predecessor’s conception of thinking. He takes preceding philosophers to have subscribed to a “dogmatic image of thought”, a representational conceptualization of thinking. I discuss the dogmatic image, especially as it is relevant to empirical thinking from the point of view of the determining judgment. Third, I will turn to Deleuze’s reading of Kant’s judgment of the sublime. Deleuze takes the third *Critique* to open a way beyond the empirical exercise of the faculties, towards the transcendent exercise of the faculties—the subject of the next chapter.

3.1. Determining Judgment

Judgements (“Urteil”; verb “urteilen”) are a special type of mental acts. Kant distinguishes between determining (“bestimmend”) and reflecting (“reflectirend”) judgements⁹⁶. When a concept⁹⁷ is given and we merely subsume the particular encountered in experience under it, we

⁹³ André Lalande notes that Kant uses faculty in a strict sense as a specific capability of the mind (e.g. understanding) distinct from mere receptivity of affectations from appearances. However, according to Lalande, a more general sense refers to the whole of receptivity as well. (Lalande 2016, 334.) I am following Deleuze in using the stricter sense of a specific capacity of the mind (or the psychic system, to use Deleuze’s term).

⁹⁴ To my knowledge, Deleuze does not use ‘empirical thinking’. Some secondary literature uses the term (e.g. Posteraro 215). This poses the possible objection that the empirical exercise of the faculties, would not constitute thinking at all for him. Answering this worry presupposes understanding the difference between transcendent and empirical thinking, so I will return to it in 4.3.

⁹⁵ I am building onto especially Deleuze’s reading of *The Critique of Pure Reason*, and more specifically, the A-deduction’s three syntheses. This type of judgment is often referred to as cognitive judgment or judgment of experience. Deleuze develops his account in *The Critical Philosophy of Kant*. I retain Deleuze’s use of ‘determining judgment’, even though the distinction between determining judgment and reflecting judgment is introduced by Kant in the third *Critique*. This choice of terms emphasises Deleuze’s reading, where the judgment of taste (a type of reflecting judgment) “manifests [manifeste] and liberates a foundation which remained covered in” the determining judgment. Because Deleuze takes a judgment to be a result of several faculties working together, the condition of all types of judgments is the indeterminate relation of the faculties uncovered in the judgment of taste. (PCK, 87.)

⁹⁶ This distinction from the *Critique of the Power of Judgement* (CJ 5:179) parallels the distinction from *The Critique of Pure Reason* between reason’s “hypothetical use”, where reason finds the universal, and its “apodictic use”: when the universal is given (CPR A646/B 674).

⁹⁷ Kant writes about the object being subsumed under “the universal (the rule, the principle, the law)” (CPJ 5:179), but I use concept—which arguably must be seen as a kind of universal.

make a determining judgement. (CPJ 5: 179, see also Voss 2013, 159). By making a determining judgment (such as “I see a dog”), the object appearing in experience is subsumed under an empirical concept (‘dog’)⁹⁸. Here, the concept is empirical, since it does not necessarily belong to the object of experience—there is no logical necessity for it to be a dog instead of, say, a cat. The result of a judgment like this is knowledge as representational propositions about objects encountered in experience (PCK, 33).

In Deleuze’s reading of Kant, the relation of the faculties, and the way they function together, is paramount. Overall, in a determining judgment, perceptual excitations are prepared by the faculty of imagination, so that the faculty of understanding may apply its concepts to the object of experience. In the rest of this subchapter, we are going to see Deleuze’s reading of how this happens.

To begin, I will briefly introduce an overall sketch of the determining judgment. In the first edition Deduction, or A-deduction, of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant defines the determining judgment to be comprised of three distinct syntheses, or mental acts of combination, and a fourth operation, “schematisation”⁹⁹. The first two, apprehension and reproduction, are performed by the faculty of imagination. These syntheses explain how our mind processes the affectations on sensibility into a singular mental representation: intuition. For Kant, the objects of experience are given through sensibility, our “capacity (receptivity) to acquire representations through the way in which we are affected by objects” (CPR, A19/B33). The third step, schematisation, explains how the pure concepts of the understanding, the categories, can be applied to intuition. The imagination “schematizes” the representations according to the a priori concepts of the understanding (categories) and prepares the intuition for the last synthesis. In the final operation, the synthesis of recognition, the understanding subsumes the object of experience under an empirical concept (such as ‘dog’).

Sensibility receives excitations and represents them as intuitions. This means, according to Deleuze, that “a diversity is represented, that is, it is posed as being enclosed [renfermée] in a

⁹⁸ In the *Prolegomena*, Kant distinguishes between a judgment of experience, distinct from a judgment of perception. The latter is not objectively valid because it does not include concepts of the understanding. (Kant 2010b, §18, 4:298.)

⁹⁹ I follow here Deleuze’s interpretation (Deleuze 1963a, 24 and 28–29). It is similar to Paul Guyer’s interpretation in *Kant and the Claims of Taste* (Guyer 1979, 85–6, see Ginsborg 1998, 45–46).

representation.”¹⁰⁰ (PCK, 24.) The diverse perceptual content of the affectations on the sensibility (colors, perceived extensive magnitudes etc.) are combined into a single representation. This is achieved by the imagination through two operations: apprehension and reproduction.

The first operation is the synthesis of apprehension, which consists of posing the diversity in a spatiotemporal location (CPR, A99). This means that the mental representations for the perceptions are allocated a location inside the mind. An intuition is a direct mark in the mind: a re-presentation of the affectations on sensibility originating from the object of experience (CPR, A 99). Second operation is that of reproduction. By this, Kant means how representations “are finally associated with each other and thereby placed in a connection in accordance with which, even without the presence of the object, one of these representations brings about a transition of the mind to the other in accordance with a constant rule” (CPR, A100). Deleuze understands this as how we “reproduce the precedent parts, so we can arrive at the next ones¹⁰¹” when observing something (PCK, 24). Take the example of the curved surface of a red apple. When your eye follows the curve of the apple, the imagination reproduces in the mind the representations of the part your eyes have already observed. Without reproduction, you would not perceive the surface of the apple as continuing. Instead, you would only see a patchwork of unrelated gradients of red.

However, in order to have a unified experience of an object, we need the faculty of understanding and its concepts. The understanding needs to think through the intuitions imagination has prepared for it: “**intuitions** [...] are **thought** through by the understanding” (CPR, A19/B33, emphasis in original, see also A69/B94). The understanding thinks through the intuitions or conceptualizes them in two ways. On the one hand, the object of experience needs to conform to the categories, as the pure concepts of the understanding, which are devoid of any empirical content. On the other hand, the understanding applies an empirical concept to the intuitions.

Kant provides twelve categories¹⁰² and states that “they apply to the object of intuition in general *a priori*” (CPR, A79/B105). This means that all objects of experience conform to these *a priori*

¹⁰⁰ “[...] une diversité est représentée, c’est-à-dire posée comme renfermée dans une représentation” (PCK, 24).

¹⁰¹ “par laquelle nous reproduisons les parties précédentes à mesure que nous arrivons aux suivantes” (PCK, 24).

¹⁰² The table of categories comprises of unity, plurality, totality, reality, negation, limitation, of inference and subsistence, of causality and dependence and of community between agent and patient, possibility-impossibility, existence-non-existence, necessity-contingence (CPR, A80/B106).

concepts¹⁰³. For example, all extensive objects must either conform to unity or plurality, that is, their number must either be one or they must be many. In this way, a category differs from an empirical concept, which relates directly to the object of experience (CPR, A320/B377).

In the third operation, imagination conforms to the understanding's categories *via* schematization. It schematises the intuition according to the *a priori* concepts of the understanding or categories. The empirical content of experience is organized according to the categories. This is a tricky subject, since Kant himself states that "schematism of our understanding is a hidden art [*Kunst*] in the depths of the human soul, whose true operations we can divine from nature and lay unveiled before our eyes only with difficulty" (CPR, A141/B180–1).

Deleuze interprets schematization as "a spatiotemporal determination corresponding itself to a category" (PCK, 28)¹⁰⁴. This means that imagination implements the rules imposed by the categories through schematization¹⁰⁵. So, if we encounter one apple in experience, it is schematized through several categories: unity, reality and limitation, because it is a singular whole with finite extension in space. The syntheses of the imagination represent the object as having a unity granted *via* the categories¹⁰⁶.

In the fourth operation, the understanding performs the synthesis of recognition. In recognition, the particular is subsumed under the empirical concept (CPR A 103–4). So, if the schematized intuition of the object of experience conforms to the empirical concept of 'dog', it is subsumed under this concept, and thus we have a determining judgment of a dog. (PCK, 28–29.) This means that the object of experience appears as a dog to the observer and is recognized as such (see also Posteraro 2015, 457)¹⁰⁷.

¹⁰³ To be precise, Deleuze notes that the categories are "*predicates of the transcendental object*" (PCK, 26). The categories describe the most universal and simple characteristics all objects must display. Kant describes this object as "that which in all of our empirical concepts in general can provide relation to an object, i.e., objective reality" (CPR, A109). So, the transcendental object, as the carrier of the categories, is that which makes possible using empirical concepts. The transcendental object functions as the "objectivity as a form in general" (PCK, 25).

¹⁰⁴ "[...] une détermination spatio-temporelle correspondant elle-même à la catégorie" (PCK, 28).

¹⁰⁵ This is important, since schematization in Deleuze's reading provides a link between concepts of the understanding and intuition. There is a gap between these two and, since intuition and concept differ in kind from one another, the vague nature of Kant's schematization does little to bridge this gap (see Watkins 2017).

¹⁰⁶ Kant places importance on the notion of apperception and the unity consciousness (CPR, A103–110), but I overlook this aspect of the third synthesis here.

¹⁰⁷ Hannah Ginsborg discusses this type of reading as a "hybrid model" and ascribes it to Paul Guyer, among others. Ginsborg places importance on how empirical concepts should guide the observation of the object of experience, and

In sum, the determining judgment involves the co-operation of imagination and the understanding. Imagination represents perceptual excitations as intuitions. Further, it schematizes these intuitions according to the pure concepts of the understanding (categories). Then, the understanding recognizes the object of experience as something already familiar, as it subsumes it under an empirical concept. However, this happens very fast and in the everyday usage of the faculties, we do not note each synthesis separately. As a result of the judgment, the thinker now holds the propositional thought, for instance, that there is a dog in their field of vision. In this way, the determining judgment provides a paradigm example of empirical thinking.

3.2. Dogmatic Image of Thought

The determining judgment reveals fundamental insights into the dogmatic image of thought. Levi Bryant defines the image of thought as “an image or set of assumptions about what it means to think.” (Bryant, 2008). In the third chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze treats the dogmatic image of thought at length, delineating eight postulates which make it up. These postulates are: principle of good nature of thought and the thinker, ideal of common sense, model of recognition, the negative of error, the privilege of designation, modality of solutions and the result of knowledge.

The “model” of the dogmatic image of thought is that of recognition. In recognition, the faculties converge on an object, or more precisely, they handle their particular givens as belonging to the same object (DR, 174; see Bryan 2008, 83–4; Voss 2013, 35; Posteraro 2015, 457). What we encounter in an experience of an object is a collection of perceptual excitations (such as magnitudes of different colors, relations, and so on). In recognition, they are assumed to belong to a unified object. What’s more, the object encountered in experience is taken to resemble an object we already know, something we can recognize. Determining judgment provides a paradigm example of this.

Of the eight postulates of the image of thought, the ideals of common sense and good sense are involved in recognition. By common sense, Deleuze refers to the way the faculties work together.

thus the syntheses involved (Ginsborg 1998, 45–7). However, Deleuze places more importance on schematization and interprets it to involve the categories. For Deleuze, empirical concepts precede all determining judgments and he overlooks how empirical concepts are formed—this might suggest that Deleuze assumes Kant overlooks the issue as well.

The faculties converge in order to recognize a single object (DR, 184, see Voss 2013, 33–4). In the case of determining judgment, we saw that imagination prepares intuitions for the application of the understanding’s concepts. Good sense is for Deleuze the distribution of the faculties (DR, 216, see Voss 2013, 33–4). In a determining judgment, imagination is subjugated to the understanding: imagination schematizes according to the concepts of the understanding (DR, 178, see also PCK, 28). The faculties of the mind are related to each other in a certain way, they have a distribution, which gives us the proper judgment type. In determining judgment, the imagination is subjugated to the understanding: imagination schematizes according to the concepts of the understanding (DR, 178, see also PCK, 35).

Together common sense and good sense lead to a harmonious operation of the faculties. Determining judgment reveals a problem embedded in representation as a whole:

“[...] the subject of representation still determines the object as really conforming to the concept, like an essence. This is why representation, in its entirety, is the element of knowledge that takes place in the recollection of the thought object and its recognition by a subject that thinks” (DR, 247)¹⁰⁸

Here, the first problem is that the empirical concept (for instance ‘dog’) is elevated to the status of essence. The empirical concept is removed from concrete reality, and it is posed as unchanging. For Deleuze, there are no essences which arise above being: virtual Ideas arise from being itself. Second problem is that the determining judgment shows the extent to which representation concerns thinking. Representational knowledge means, for Deleuze, that the concept has to be given in advance—we need the concept of ‘dog’ to encounter one in experience. This suggests that the object encountered has to be already *known*. The object is recognized as such, and the concept is only recollected. There is no possibility of encountering something new—of thinking anything new (I will discuss how Deleuze’s transcendent thinking allows for creation in thinking in 5.1.).

¹⁰⁸ “[...] le sujet de la représentation détermine encore l’objet comme réellement conforme au concept, comme essence. C’est pourquoi la représentation dans son ensemble est l’élément du savoir qui s’effectue dans la recollection de l’objet pensé et sa réognition par un sujet qui pense.” (DR, 247.)

The model of recognition is applied in the recognition of established values, as opposed to the establishment of new ones. Deleuze refers to Heidegger's *What is Called Thinking* (1951–2) to re-iterate Heidegger's point: we are not thinking yet (DR, 188). What is called “thinking” (empirical thinking) in the dogmatic image of thought amounts to no more than conventions and ingrained conceptions. In creating new values, “[w]hat is distinct in the new, that is, in difference, is to seek in thinking forces, which are not those of recognition, not today nor tomorrow, forces of a wholly other model, in a *terra incognita* never recognized or recognizable.” (DR, 177)¹⁰⁹. Creating new values aligns itself with going beyond the model of recognition. Indeed, this applies to creation in thinking as well (as we will see in more depth in 5.1.).

To create, to think something new, we have to free ourselves from the yoke of the dogmatic image of thought, because it “betrays most profoundly what it means to think, alienating the two powers of difference and repetition, and philosophical commencement and recommencement”¹¹⁰, (DR, 217). Deleuze writes that “[t]he conditions of a true [véritable] critique and a true [véritable] creation are the same: destruction of the image of thought which presupposes itself, the genesis of an act of thought [l’acte de penser] in thinking [pensée] itself” (DR, 182).¹¹¹ Breaking from the dogmatic image will be equal to transcendent thinking, but before that, we will see how Deleuze’s reading of Kant’s judgment of the sublime points towards a new kind of thinking: transcendent thinking (see chapter 4 below).

3.3. Discord of the Faculties

Deleuze is interested in an exercise of the faculties, which propels them beyond their empirical use, beyond the dogmatic image of thought. For Deleuze, Kant, in *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, uncovers a path to this in his judgment of the sublime¹¹². The feeling of sublimity arises from a discordant relation between the faculties. For Deleuze, this means that Kant no longer presumes the relation of the faculties, as he did in the determining judgment, but shows

¹⁰⁹ “Ce qui s’établit dans le nouveau n’est précisément pas le nouveau. Car le propre du nouveau, c’est-à-dire la différence, est de solliciter dans la pensée des forces qui ne sont pas celles de la reconnaissance, ni aujourd’hui ni demain, des puissances d’un tout autre modèle, dans une *terra incognita* jamais reconnue ni reconnaissable.” (DR, 177.)

¹¹⁰ “[...] trahit au plus profond ce que signifie penser, aliénant les deux puissances de la différence et de la répétition, du commencement et du recommencement philosophiques” (Deleuze 1968, 217).

¹¹¹ “Les conditions d’une véritable critique et d’une véritable création sont les mêmes : destruction de l’image d’une pensée qui se présuppose elle-même, genèse de l’acte de penser dans la pensée même” (DR, 182).

¹¹² Deleuze’s reading of the sublime judgment has been discussed (see Voss 2013, 166–9 and Lord 2015)

how their relation is engendered. (PCK, 75.)¹¹³ In the next chapter, we are going to see how Deleuze ventures to envision his conception of transcendent thinking on the model of a discordant relation of the faculties.

A judgment of the sublime is a type of reflective judgment¹¹⁴. Whereas in a determining judgment, a particular is encountered in experience and subsumed under a universal, in a reflective judgment, the universal has to be found and applied to the particular (CPJ, 5:179, see also Voss 2013, 159). This means that the concept is not readily available but has to be found through reflection.

The sublime object¹¹⁵ is “absolutely great, great in every respect (beyond all comparison)” (CPJ §25; 5: 250). For example, a hiker might experience the towering mountain range as sublime. This means that for the proclaimer of the judgement, there isn’t anything that can be judged to be greater than the object of experience. However, Kant points out that all estimations of size are always made relative to the perceiver (CPJ §25; 5: 250). For someone standing on the foothill of a mountain, that mountain might seem incomprehensibly large, whereas the objective distances between the stars in the night sky, being vastly greater, do not appear as large.

Properly speaking, sublimity is not a characteristic of the object: “The object serves for the presentation of a sublimity that can be found in the mind for what is properly sublime cannot be contained in any sensible form” (CPJ, 5: 245). Sublimity is something inherent to the mind of the observer, and the particular object of experience only acts as a “presentation” of it. The sublime

¹¹³ This is closely related to the pure judgment of taste. For Kant, the subjective feeling of pleasure grounds the judgment of taste. In turn, this feeling comes from the faculties’s free play: “[t]he powers of cognition that are set into play by this representation [of the reflected form] are hereby in **free play**, since no determinate concept restricts them to a particular rule of cognition” (CPJ, 5:217). More precisely, the form of the reflected object is purposive in inducing a “free play” of the cognitive faculties in us, which then leads to the feeling of pleasure. (CPJ, 5:223.)

Deleuze reads the free play as being an indeterminate relation of the faculties, presupposed by the relation they take up in other kinds of judgments—in this way the judgment of taste functions as the foundation of all judgments (PCK 70–2; see Lord 2015, 87, 94; Voss 2013, 158–164). Deleuze proposes that the *Analytic of the Sublime* provides a genetic model which proves to be analogous to the genesis in the judgment of taste (PCK, 85; see Lord 2015, 96).

¹¹⁴ Kant’s third *Critique*’s main concern is the pure judgment of beauty, for instance, “This rose is beautiful.” For Kant, this is not a determining judgment because, it is not a judgment in which the subject applies the concept ‘beautiful’ to the rose. Indeed, what grounds the judgment of beauty, is the subject’s feeling of satisfaction: “That is **beautiful** which is cognized without a concept as the object of a **necessary** satisfaction” (CPJ, 5: 240, emphasis in original). Here, we are talking about a judgment of the sublime, not about a pure judgment of taste.

¹¹⁵ Sublime objects come in two kinds: a mathematically sublime object (such as a mountain range) is something of an immense size in comparison to the subject of experience. Dynamically sublime objects (like the sea during a storm) remind the human subject of their vanishing power when confronted with the strength of forces of nature. (CPJ, §24.)

actually “[...] concerns only ideas of reason, which, though no presentation adequate to them is possible, are provoke and called to mind precisely by this inadequacy, which does allow of sensible presentation.” (CPJ, 5: 245, see also Voss 2013, 145–6.) In a sublime object, we are reminded of an idea of reason, which cannot have any correlate in sensible nature. An idea of reason is a type of concept going beyond any possible experience (CPR, A320/B376–377). For example, the idea of God, as a perfect being, is something incomprehensible to the human subject. When confronted with an object too large to be comprehended, the mind sees a presentation of an idea of reason, even though one “cannot be contained in any sensible form” (CPJ, 5: 245).

However, what happens when the faculties try to process the sublime object? Kant writes that imagination needs to complete the two syntheses of apprehension and comprehension, to assess its size (CPJ, 5:251.). As we saw earlier in 3.1., by apprehension, the sense perceptions are represented in the mind as spatiotemporal intuitions. By comprehension, Kant means the way imagination retains apprehended intuitions and orders them into a sequence to measure the magnitude (CPJ 5: 252). So, with an example of a mountain, the imagination starts to convert the raw perceptual data into separate representations: a dance of shadows and light becomes a representation of a peak, for instance. However, as the imagination proceeds with taking up the “quantum in the imagination intuitively”. (CPJ, 5:251), comprehension reaches its “maximum” and as apprehension continues, “partial representations of the intuition of the senses that were apprehended first already begin to fade in the imagination” (CPJ 5: 252). The imagination has reached a maximum in its capacity of comprehension: it cannot provide a whole representation of the sublime object.

Indeed, the mind is drawn to the ideas of reason precisely because of this inadequacy. Kant writes that when imagination begins to comprehend the object, it is “striving to advance to the infinite, while in our reason there lies a claim to absolute totality, as to a real idea, the very inadequacy of our faculty for estimating the magnitude of the things of the sensible world awakens the feeling of a supersensible faculty in us” (CPJ 5: 250). The supra-sensible faculty, reason, is awakened by the failure of imagination to comprehend the object. As Deleuze’s reading places importance on the relations of the faculties, this means that reason, *via* its idea, exerts control over imagination (PCK, 73).

Deleuze interprets the failure of imagination to reveal a tension between the two faculties of imagination and reason: reason, through its idea, assigns imagination with an impossible task of the aesthetic comprehension of the sublime object. This results in a “*disaccord*, an experienced contradiction between the will [exigence] of reason and the power [puissance] of the imagination.” (PCK, 74; see Lord 2015, 96.)¹¹⁶ For Deleuze, this reveals how the relation of the faculties in the judgement is engendered: reason is elevated to a commanding role over imagination through the projection of its idea in the sublime object. However, imagination cannot complete the task reason assigns it (aesthetic comprehension of the sublime object) and from this tension arises a “discordant relation” between the faculties. (PCK, 74.) Kant’s treatment of the sublime provides a genetic model of the relation of the faculties in this judgment (PCK, 76).¹¹⁷

Deleuze writes that this discordant exercise of the faculties, uncovered in the judgment of the sublime, “defines the philosophy of future” (Deleuze 1993, 49). Indeed, it was a preamble to what Deleuze calls the transcendent exercise of the faculties.

4. Transcendent Thinking

In the judgment of the sublime, imagination and reason enter a discordant relation. This points to how the faculties function in their transcendent exercise. Each faculty meets an object which pushes it to its limit (as imagination was pushed in the judgment of the sublime). A series begins with an initial encounter by sensibility and then continues as a chain of disruptions of the empirical functioning of each faculty. In each case, the faculty meets something which is distinctive to itself, something the other faculties cannot grasp, and which propels it to its transcendent exercise. Because the limit-object of one faculty cannot be grasped as such by the other faculties, they cannot converge upon an identical object as they did in the case of a determining judgment, and their harmonious collaboration is derailed. The chain of encounters comes together in transcendent thinking. In this chapter, we are going to see in detail how this unravels.

¹¹⁶ “[...] *désaccord* une contradiction vécue entre l’exigence de la raison et la puissance de l’imagination” (PCK, 74).

¹¹⁷ According to Deleuze, we can provide an analogous genetic model for the judgment of taste, where reason provides a principle for engendering the relation of imagination and understanding “in a synthetic way” (PCK, 76).

It will help the reader to remember that Deleuze's transcendent exercises of the faculties do not have a direct correlate in ordinary experience of a human subject. Instead, transcendent thinking is undergone subconsciously by the psychic system, and Deleuze describes the principles the faculties follow in such an act. Additionally, none of the separate transcendent exercises themselves correlate with conscious empirical experiences either. It is the nature of the transcendent exercise of the faculties to reach beyond their empirical use to a sub-representative and sub-conscious level. This means that the intermediate encounters (imagination, memory) cannot be described in detail—they only come together as part of transcendent thinking. Indeed, Deleuze does not strive to describe a first-person experience, but to provide an understanding of the principles which render production of the new feasible within a psychic system—something I return to in 5.1.

However, at this point it is necessary to explain Deleuze's use of concepts 'transcendental' and 'transcendent'. According to Deleuze, the image of thought "presupposes a certain distribution of the empirical and of the transcendental, and it is this distribution which needs to be judged, that is, this transcendental model involved in the image" (DR, 174).¹¹⁸ In the paradigmatic case of Kant¹¹⁹, knowledge has limits and the different faculties have their proper and improper use. The faculties can be used empirically or transcendently. In empirical use, they stay within experience, whereas in transcendental use, their exercise "reaches out beyond the boundaries of experience." (CPR A296/B353.) Empirical refers to what can be experienced, and each experience is defined as empirical. Transcendental, on the contrary, reaches beyond what can be experienced. This, however, is distinct from a transcendent use: "a principle that takes away these limits, which indeed bids us to overstep them, is called **transcendent**" (CPR A296/B353)¹²⁰. In transcendent use, the faculties are not utilized correctly, because the limits of possible experience are blurred. For Kant, this will lead to misunderstandings and illusions (ibid.).

¹¹⁸ "[...] cette image [de la pensée] présuppose une certaine répartition de l'empirique et du transcendental ; et c'est cette répartition qu'il faut juger, c'est-à-dire ce modèle transcendental impliqué dans l'image" (DR, 174).

¹¹⁹ Deleuze does refer to his predecessors in a fairly monolithic manner. However, it is beyond the scope of this Master's thesis to evaluate how Deleuze's dogmatic image of thought should be seen to apply to many authors.

¹²⁰ Closely related to these questions are empirical illusions and transcendental illusions. In an empirical illusion, the faculty of judgment misleads (e.g. *via* imagination), and a mistaken judgment is made. Whereas a "transcendental illusion, which influences principles [...] carries us away beyond the empirical use of the categories and holds out to us the semblance of extending the **pure understanding**" (CPR A295/B351–2). In other words, transcendental illusions are especially problematic since they lead us towards unjustified claims (e.g. in metaphysics).

However, for Deleuze, transcendent use is not something we should strive to avoid, as “[t]ranscendent does not signify at all that the faculty aims at objects that are beyond the world, but on the contrary, it [i.e. the faculty] grasps that which concerns it exclusively in the world, and which births it into the world” (DR, 186)¹²¹. For Deleuze, transcendent exercise of the faculties reveals what is unique to each faculty. Additionally, it points towards their constitution, in the sense of revealing their internal differences (below we will see how the faculties emerge from the process of differenciation). Not only explaining the emergence of subjectivity, but also explaining the creation of new in thinking (which empirical thinking is unable to do), and in doing so, render transcendent thinking truly transcendental¹²² and not traced from the empirical (DR 249; I will return and evaluate this in 5.1. and 5.2.).

For Deleuze, the harmonious relation of the faculties is tied to the yoke of the postulate of common sense of the dogmatic image of thought. In order to overcome this image and reach beyond representation, we need to disrupt the functioning of thinking according to the image of thought. As the transcendent exercise of a faculty is beyond the empirical, it is also beyond representation (DR, 189).

Below, I am going to argue for a novel interpretation of transcendental conception of thinking. First, we should distinguish between empirical and transcendent thinking in *Difference and Repetition*. For Deleuze, learning is an instance of transcendent exercise of the faculties, therefore, it is special case of transcendent thinking. Furthermore, I propose that to be even more precise, transcendent thinking is a special case of objectal thinking (John Roffe’s useful distinction introduced in 2.3.), that is, of the process of differenciation unravelling through the faculties of a psychic system.

¹²¹ “La forme transcendante d’une faculté se confond avec son exercice disjoint, supérieur ou transcendant. Transcendant ne signifie pas du tout que la faculté s’adresse à des objets hors du monde, mais au contraire qu’elle saisit dans le monde ce qui la concerne exclusivement, et qui la fait naître au monde.” (DR, 186.)

¹²² Deleuze writes that the transcendent exercise of a faculty reveals the faculty’s “transcendental form” (DR, 186). For Deleuze, transcendent thinking reveals a transcendental conception of thinking, something I will return to in 5.2.

4.1. Transcendent Exercise of the Faculties

Transcendent thinking¹²³ begins with the initial encounter by sensibility (DR, 188)¹²⁴. Deleuze follows loosely Kant's use of "sensibility". For Kant, the objects of experience are given through sensibility, our "capacity (receptivity) to acquire representations"¹²⁵ through the way in which we are affected by objects" (CPR, A19/B33). For example, when I see an apple, it is sensibility which is affected by the object. So, sensibility is the capacity of the psychic system to be affected by its surroundings. However, for Kant, experience is synthesized in the determining judgment. In Deleuze's transcendent exercise, sensibility functions in a wholly another way as it encounters something it cannot treat in its empirical exercise.

According to Deleuze, sensibility, in its transcendent exercise, encounters intensity (DR, 187–8; see Benit 2018, 33)¹²⁶. However, the reader remembers that intensity as an ontological order, is

¹²³ In chapters 4–6 of *Difference and Givenness* (2008), Levi Bryant discusses at length the series of encounters, which make up the series leading to transcendent thinking (pp. 92–174). There are several key differences between my interpretation and Bryant's interpretation, which render them incompatible. First, my conviction is that we can interpret transcendent thinking almost exclusively on the basis of *Difference and Repetition*, whereas Bryant draws from the breadth of Deleuze's works. Second, I relate transcendent thinking to what Deleuze says about the faculties. This means that for me, the chain of encounters Deleuze introduces, results in a singular act of the psychic system (transcendent thinking)—Bryant's interpretation borders on viewing each encounter as a singular (conscious) experience. I find symptomatic, the brevity with which Deleuze introduces the intermediary encounters: each encounter is but a part of the whole, and as such, we cannot correlate it with an experience. This also aligns itself with Deleuze's open-ended view of the faculties (which I treat later), which Bryant seems not to acknowledge, by the way he seems to take Deleuze's encounters as an exhaustive list. Third, Bryant does not seem to have interpreted the ontological scheme of *Difference and Repetition* correctly (insisting on viewing virtual Ideas as "differential essences" and describing Deleuze as a hyper-rationalist (ibid. ix, 13), and this too, leads the interpretation astray. These key differences already highlight the reasons behind the incommensurability of our interpretations. This means that, due to the space I am allocated in this Master's thesis, I cannot exhaustively discuss all the differences in our interpretations. However, below I discuss some of our differences, as well as make use of several insightful readings Bryant has defended.

¹²⁴ It seems that the initial encounter in sensibility might have its origin in Deleuze's reading of Kant. In *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, Deleuze argues that the reflective judgment (or as I would specify, the pure judgment of taste, which is a specific type of reflective judgment) is foundational of all kinds of judgments. This is because it is grounded on the free play of the faculties, which Deleuze reads as being the indeterminate relation of the faculties and, thus, the condition of all kinds of judgments (PCK, 72). However, this lies beyond the scope of this Master's thesis.

¹²⁵ Due to Deleuze's critique of representation, it should be noted that Deleuze takes sensibility to also work in a nonrepresentational way (beyond only representing excitations as intuitions in Kant's manner)—below we will see that in its transcendent exercise, sensibility works on a sub-representational level.

¹²⁶ Levi Bryant does not seem to acknowledge at all that sensibility encounters intensity in its transcendent exercise (Bryant 2008, chapter 4). Instead, Bryant refers mistakenly to the synthesis of habit as producing quality (ibid. 93) to make sense of this encounter with that "which cannot be but sensed". However, Deleuze is clear about this: "It is not qualitative opposition in sensibility, but an element which is itself difference, and which creates at the same time quality in the sensible and the transcendent exercise in the sensibility: this element is intensity" (DR, 187). This is a good example of the way Bryant's interpretation relies on a confused interpretation of Deleuze's ontological scheme in *Difference and Repetition*.

itself imperceptible. It is the order of intensive difference, which remains nonqualified and nonextended. (see 2.1.) The empirical exercise of the faculties is confronted with actual things that intensity gives rise, but intensity remains itself “covered” by the qualities it engenders. Therefore, intensity remains insensible to empirical sensibility (DR, 187, 294; see Benit 32–3.) However, the second meaning of intensity, sensible intensity (e.g. the intensity of the colour of a given object) is directly perceptible. Indeed, Deleuze is equivocating between the two senses to highlight their connection.

When sensibility ascends to its transcendental exercise, it confronts intensity, which “is at the same time the imperceptible, and that which cannot be but sensed” (DR, 297; see Lord 2015, 98)¹²⁷. The “imperceptible” intensity refers to the unqualified and nonextended order of pure intensive differences. This intensive order cannot be met directly by sensibility. However, qualities are given through sensible intensity. As all qualities are given through sensible intensity, this kind of intensity is met necessarily by sensibility—we cannot conceive of a quality which is not given through sensible intensity.

According to Deleuze, quality works as a “sign” as it “refers to an implicated order of constituting differences” (DR, 294; DR 188–9; see Smith 1996, 39)¹²⁸. Quality refers to the intensive order of difference. Intensive differences are “implicated” in the nonextended and unqualified order of intensity: this order works as the individuating field from which all extension and all quality arises (see 2.1.). However, as all perceptible qualities and extensions arise from this intensive order, and it is on this ground that they work as signs which refer to it. In this way, the perceptible sensible intensity works as a sign for the imperceptible order of intensive differences. In this way, intensity in these two meanings is “that which cannot be but sensed [senti] from the point of view of transcendent sensibility which apprehends it immediately in the encounter.” (DR, 187–8.)¹²⁹

However, not sensibility, nor the psychic system as a whole, interpret sensible intensity as a sign consciously. Deleuze is clear that transcendent thinking and its constituent transcendent exercises

¹²⁷ “L’intensité est à la fois l’insensible et ce qui ne peut être que senti” (DR, 298).

¹²⁸ “[...] renvoyer à un ordre impliqué de différences constituantes” (DR, 294).

¹²⁹ “[...] ce qui ne peut être [187/188] que senti du point de vue de la sensibilité transcendante qui l’appréhende immédiatement dans la rencontre” (DR, 187–8).

of the faculties are unconscious (e.g. DR, 214). In its transcendent exercise, sensibility opens up to intensity, which is another figure of internal difference (see 1.1., 2.1. and 2.3.). The chain of encounters will continue, and in each case, “a free figure of difference awakens the faculty”¹³⁰ (DR, 189), and “[e]very faculty discovers [...] its radical difference and its eternal repetition, its differential and repetitive element” (DR, 186)¹³¹. In this sense, the transcendent exercise of each faculty means an opening up to the effects of internal difference.

The series continues as each faculty discovers what is singular to only them. This happens through an encounter with the “limit-object or the transcendent of every faculty” (DR, 190, see also Bryant 2008, 100, Voss 2013, 142–3)¹³². Deleuze refers to the limit-object of each faculty by the latin gerundive derived from the faculty’s name, *sentiendum*, *imaginandum*, *memorandum* and *cogitandum* (DR, 182–4). The gerundive is translated as a need to do or achieve something¹³³, *sentiendum* as the need to sense something, for instance. This emphasises the nonvoluntary character of the encounters: psychic systems do not choose to engage in them but are forced to do so.

As the limit-object of each faculty is specific to only it, the other faculties cannot treat the same object (as they did in their empirical exercise, as evidenced in the case of determining judgment in 3.1.). For instance, the limit-object of sensibility is sensible intensity, which no other faculty can encounter. As the faculties ascend to their transcendent use, “common sense is no longer there to limit the specific contribution of sensibility to the conditions of a joint work; it enters into a discordant play” (DR, 182).¹³⁴ So, sensibility encounters the intensive which propels out to its transcendent use. This encounter propels the faculties outside of a common sense orchestrating the exercise of the faculties in a determining judgment (see 3.1.) However, this relation of the faculties, “discordant relation”, was already sketched out in Kant’s judgment of the sublime (see 3.3. above, as well as Lord 2015, 99). Because representation presupposes the model of

¹³⁰ “[...] c’est chaque fois une libre figure de la différence qui éveille la faculté” (DR, 189).

¹³¹ “Chaque faculté découvre alors la passion qui lui est propre, c’est-à-dire sa différence radicale et son éternelle répétition, son élément différentiel et répétiteur” (DR, 186).

¹³² “[...] vont de la sensibilité à la pensée, et de la pensée à la sensibilité, capables d’engendrer dans chaque cas, suivant un ordre qui leur appartient, l’objet-limite ou transcendant de chaque faculté” (DR, 190).

¹³³ Probably the most famous example is Horace’s Ode 37 (also known as the Cleopatra-ode since it describes the atmosphere as news of Cleopatra’s demise reach the narrator of the poem), which begins with the line “Nunc est bibendum”, which translates literally “Now is time for drinking”, ‘bibendum’ being the gerundive.

¹³⁴ “Le sens commun n’est plus là pour limiter l’apport spécifique de la sensibilité aux conditions d’un travail conjoint ; celle-ci entre alors dans un jeu discordant, ses organes deviennent métaphysiques” (DR, 182.)

recognition and the convergence of the faculties on an identical object, the fact that each faculty meets something only they can comprehend means that the limit-object is necessarily sub-representational.

Deleuze dubs the communication of the violence between the faculties “para-sense”¹³⁵ (DR, 190, 250), opposed to common sense. In a para-sense, the faculties do not work together. They only communicate the violence of their own encounter with what is most proper to them. As Daniela Voss writes, “Ideas set their corresponding faculty into motion and carry it to its extreme limit, but at the same time this violence is communicated from one faculty to another” (Voss 2013, 143; see Lord 2017, 99).

The initial encounter with intensity cannot be repeated by any of the other faculties, so something else needs to communicate the violence to the next faculty. According to Deleuze, virtual Ideas enact the communication between the faculties¹³⁶, as they “go from sensibility to thinking, and from thinking to sensibility, being capable of engendering in each case, following an order which belongs to them, the limit-object or the transcendent of every faculty” (DR, 190)¹³⁷. The virtual Idea traversing the faculties is not the limit-object, but “is capable of engendering” (ibid) it. In 2.3., we saw that intensity determines the actualization of an Idea. Here, it makes sense that the initial encounter is between sensibility and intensity, as intensity determines the actualization of the Idea, which begins to traverse the faculties according to the para-sense.

We must read the series of encounters as constituting a process of differentiation^{t_c}. The initial encounter with intensity determines the actualisation of a virtual Idea. and this means that a process of actualisation begins to unravel throughout the faculties of the psychic system. Levi Bryant is right in taking faculties to be “tendencies characterizing being. They are the differentials or joints of being itself.” (Bryant 2008, 97–8). In this way, transcendent exercise of a

¹³⁵ The word choice of para-sense refers first to the paradox, opposed to common sense (DR, 190, 250). Second, it refers to the classical Greek ‘παρά’, a preposition used commonly to denote movement from somewhere. The second meaning emphasises the communication of the encounter.,

¹³⁶ Indeed, the Ideas provide the virtual unconsciousness, which “defines itself by the extra-propositional and non-actual characteristic of Ideas in the para-sense” (DR, 251)¹³⁶. A virtual Idea is beyond representation, as an object, an empirical exercise of the faculties cannot treat it.

¹³⁷ “[...] vont de la sensibilité à la pensée, et de la pensée à la sensibilité, capables d’engendrer dans chaque cas, suivant un ordre qui leur appartient, l’objet-limite ou transcendant de chaque faculté” (DR, 190).

faculty means that it is differentiated according to the Idea which is traversing the faculties (I will return to this below in 4.2.)

Deleuze describes very briefly how the series of encounters continues through the intermediate encounters of imagination and memory. The reason for his brevity is that there are, by definition, no conscious experiences which correlates with any of the encounters that elevate the faculties to their transcendent exercises. His aim is to describe the principles which guide this sub-representational functioning of the faculties. Each encounter gains its meaning as a link in the chain of encounters leading up to and coming together in transcendent thinking¹³⁸. This is analogous to the way we saw Deleuze read Kant's determining judgment as resulting from imagination functioning according to the understanding—indeed, there is no determining judgement without imagination, nor is there one without the understanding.

Beth Lord writes that “[p]ara-sense indicates a commonality through divergence, a difference that draws together” (Lord 2015, 100), and that difference is indeed the internal difference of each faculty¹³⁹. The limit-object drives the faculty to discover “the passion that is most proper to it, that is, its radical difference and its eternal repetition, its differential and repetitive element, like the instant engendering of its act and the eternal overturning of its object, its manner of being born as already repeating” (DR, 186)¹⁴⁰. So, when a faculty confronts what is most singular to it, the object only it can process, it discovers its internal difference, and how it is engendered by this difference. The faculty discovers how it is “born as already repeating.” Below, I argue that we must read these encounters as instances of differenciation, which explains that being born refers to being transformed by this process—the faculties undergo a change, they are engendered (or given birth) as different from what they were before the encounter.

¹³⁸ Levy Bryant (2008) interprets each link of this chain as a (quasi-)independent encounter bordering on an experience.

¹³⁹ Levy Bryant writes: “The encounter [with the limit-object of a faculty] is the sign of a limit, which in turn indicates a domain of difference belonging to that faculty alone” (Bryant 2008, 100), and I would precise, that it is indeed its internal difference—this will become more evident if we think of the whole process of transcendent thinking as differenciation.

¹⁴⁰ “Chaque faculté découvre alors la passion qui lui est propre, c’est-à-dire sa différence radicale et son éternelle répétition, son élément différentiel et répétiteur, comme l’engendrement instantané de son acte et l’éternel ressassement de son objet, sa manière de naître en répétant déjà” (DR, 186).

Next in the series, sensibility communicates the violence of the encounter with its limit object to imagination. This object is the *imaginandum*, that which must be imagined. Deleuze writes that “it’s the phantasm, the disparity in the phantasm that constitutes the φανταστέον, that which cannot be but imagined, empirical unimaginable” (DR, 188)¹⁴¹. As Deleuze talks about the phantasm, it does not refer Kantian imagination which reproduces perceptual content in the form of an intuition in the mind (see 3.1. above), nor does it suggest imagination’s workings in a judgment of the sublime. Again, Deleuze is not referring to something we can attain in an empirical exercise of imagination. Indeed, on the basis of the text, we cannot describe or define the phantasm any more closely¹⁴². Instead, it is “a free form of difference that awakes the faculty and awakes it as the different of this difference” (DR, 189)¹⁴³. For these reasons, it lies in the unconscious exercise of the faculty on a non-representative level. However, what is important is that it breaks imagination from its empirical use and elevates it to its transcendent exercise.

Next up is the *memorandum* of memory. For Deleuze, the limit object is “the dissimilar in the pure form of time which constitutes the immemorial of a transcendent memory” (DR, 188)¹⁴⁴. The “pure form of time” refers to time as the “form of everything that changes and moves, but it is an unchanging form and does not change.” (Deleuze 1993, 42, see 1.2. above for more¹⁴⁵)¹⁴⁶. The only constant for Deleuze is change, and, for memory, its internal difference must be the “dissimilar” which always returns as different—and as such, cannot be recalled. As in Deleuze’s reading of eternal return (see 1.2. and 1.3.), that which returns is only the dissimilar, or in other words, what repeats itself, is difference. Time as the form of change, underlies the workings of memory, and in its transcendental exercise, memory is confronted with its internal difference, of the “dissimilar in the pure form of time” (ibid.).

¹⁴¹ “[...] c’est le fantasme, la disparité dans le fantasme qui constitue le φανταστέον, ce qui ne peut être qu’imaginé, l’inimaginable empirique” (DR, 188).

¹⁴² Levi Bryant does not discuss at all the transcendent exercise of imagination—symptomatic of the way his interpretation misunderstands the role of the individual transcendent exercises.

¹⁴³ “[...] c’est chaque fois une libre figure de la différence qui éveille la faculté, et l’éveille comme le différent de cette différence” (DR, 189).

¹⁴⁴ “[...] le dissemblable dans la forme pure du temps qui constitue l’immémorial d’une mémoire transcendante” (DR, 188).

¹⁴⁵ Levi Bryant interprets this, instead, as relating to the pure past (Bryant 2008, chapter 5). The pure past concerns the second passive synthesis of time (memory). Pure past is the ontological conception of the past, which grounds the present produced by the first synthesis of time. (see 1.2. above.)

¹⁴⁶ “Il est la forme de tout ce qui change et se meut, mais c’est une forme immuable et qui ne change pas” (Deleuze 1993, 42).

The series of encounters¹⁴⁷ comes together in thinking meeting its *cogitandum*. As memory transmits the violence of its encounter, thinking meets its cogitandum: “not the intelligible, because it is but the mode under which we think what could be other than thought” (DR, 183). In other words, intelligibility is the mode, which renders objects thinkable by the empirical exercise of the faculties. That is, the conditions of a determining judgment: the object must be shared by the faculties working under common sense. So, transcendent thinking’s limit object is not the intelligible, “but the being of the intelligible as the last power of thinking, unthinkable as well” (DR, 183–4)¹⁴⁸. The being of the intelligible refers to Deleuze’s conception of the two figures of internal difference, as the condition of any representation of objects (see 1.2. and 2.3.). Indeed, the unthinkable constitutes the whole of the series of encounters in the transcendent exercise of the faculties. None of them are thinkable from the perspective of the empirical use of the faculties. The virtual Idea which has engendered the *cogitandum* of thinking by raising the other faculties to their transcendent exercise. All of this points to the internal difference of the thinker and elevates thinking to its “last power” (DR, 184). This points to the internal difference of the thinker we saw in chapter one.

Transcendent thinking is engendered by each of the faculties of the thinker being exposed to their internal difference and discovering what is most singular about them. Each of these transcendent exercises of the faculties gains their meaning from their relations with one another—Deleuze does not describe more than the principle by which they are propelled into their transcendent exercise, i.e., meeting their internal difference. Therefore, the series of encounters results in one unconscious act of the psychic system: transcendent thinking.

4.2. Thinker of Transcendent Thinking and Differen^t_ciation

At this point, we can make sense of transcendent thinking in relation to Deleuze’s conception of internal difference (as we saw in chapter 1). The thinker of transcendent thinking is the fractured I (see 1.1.). The fractured I “is forced to think that which cannot be but thought, not the Same, but

¹⁴⁷ Deleuze’s conception of the faculties is open-ended, so we can suppose that there can be many more intermediate encounters (DR, 186–7, 330–1, see also Voss 2013, 142.).

¹⁴⁸ “[...] non pas l’intelligible, car celui-ci n’est encore que le mode sous lequel on pense ce qui peut être autre chose que pensé, mais l’être de l’intelligible comme dernière puissance de la pensée, l’impensable aussi bien” (DR, 183–4).

this transcendent ‘aleatory point’, always Other by nature” (DR, 188; see Smith 1996, 31) ¹⁴⁹. As the fractured I tries to attain itself as a thinking being, it can only reach itself as given in time (the “transcendent ‘aleatory’¹⁵⁰ point”), and thus it becomes other than what it was initially (see 1.1.). The thinker of transcendent thinking is the fractured I, impaled by the straight line of time, as the form of change. In other words, transcendent thinking exposes the thinker to its internal difference, and forces it to repeat itself as different from what it was. As such, transcendent thinking engages the thinker in eternal return¹⁵¹ (see 1.3. and 2.3.).

Here we can also connect transcendent thinking to the passive subjectivity, which cannot think its own activity (see 1.1., and 1.3.). Thinking is “an affectation of a passive self which feels [sent] that its own thinking, its own intelligence, by which, it says I, exercises in himself and on himself, not by himself.” (DR, 117)¹⁵² Transcendent thinking as the violence running through the faculties is an Other to the passive subject. The unconscious activity of transcendent thinking is something the passive subject cannot control, nor even understand through empirical thinking. Transcendent thinking disrupts the thinker, breaks the common sense of the faculties empirical use, and exposes the thinker’s core of changing being (DR, 188). “[T]hinking is forced to think also its central collapse, its fracture, its own natural “impotence”, which is confounded with the greatest power, that is with its cogitanda” (DR, 192)¹⁵³. The empirical thinking of the passive subject confronts its own incapability to cope with transcendent thinking without collapsing. What characterizes transcendent thinking is its “universal *ungrounding* [*effondement*]” (DR, 251). Transcendent thinking is the model of thinking that satisfies Deleuze’s new philosophy of internal difference and hidden repetition.

¹⁴⁹ “[...] contraint de penser ce qui ne peut être que pensé, non pas le Même, mais ce ‘point aléatoire’ transcendant, toujours Autre par nature” (DR, 188).

¹⁵⁰ Aleatory refers to the throw of the dice. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze discusses eternal return *via* the metaphor of a throw of the dice (Deleuze 2010, 29–31). Here, the aleatory point refers to the hidden repetition forced by the internal difference in eternal return (see 1.3.).

¹⁵¹ Daniela Voss does not distinguish between empirical thinking and transcendent thinking, as I do. However, Voss also links transcendent thinking to eternal return: “[t]hrough the repetition of the eternal return the identity of the thinking subject is dissolved and turned into a series of little selves or simulacra. Thought occurs only at this extreme point of the fractured I. The transcendental and genetic conditions of thought have thus to be considered in relation to Deleuze’s complex theory of time.” (Voss 2013, 210.)

¹⁵² “[...] une affection d’un moi passif qui sent que sa propre pensée, sa propre intelligence, ce par quoi il dit JE, s’exerce en lui et sur lui, non pas par lui” (DR, 117).

¹⁵³ “[...] la pensée est forcée de penser, c’est aussi bien son effondrement central, sa fêlure, son propre ‘impouvoir’ naturel, qui se confond avec la plus grande puissance” (DR, 192).

However, Deleuze clearly connects transcendent thinking to differenciation. At the very end of the third chapter of *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze, after having discussed transcendent thinking, he poses the question: “What is thinking such as this, and what is its process in the world?” (DR, 217).¹⁵⁴ In the succeeding two chapters, Deleuze introduces the process of differenciation, and this textual evidence confirms that transcendent thinking, is indeed a form of differenciation.

In a transcendent exercise, each faculty is actually engaged in the process of differenciation¹⁵⁵. Faculties are components of the psychic system, and as such, have their actual counterparts. There is no room in Deleuze’s ontology for faculties as supernatural spiritual capabilities. Indeed, Levi Bryant is right in taking faculties to be “tendencies characterizing being” (Bryant 2008, 97–8). Each faculty has a virtual side, and an actual side, and their persistence in a psychic system is founded upon an actualization of a virtual Idea (see 2.3).

This means that transcendent exercise of the faculties actually describes the process of differenciation. A process of change begins, as the first encounter with intensity is initiated. From there, intensity determines the actualisation of a virtual idea (as in 2.3). As the actualization proceeds, the faculty succumbs to a transformation, as its actualized being changes, or as it differentiates. According to Deleuze, Ideas function as differentials of thinking, or the unconsciousness of a pure thinking (DR, 251)—in the way they traverse the faculties of the thinker in para-sense. This chain of encounters “runs through the bits of a dissolved self as the sides of a fractures I” (DR, 190)¹⁵⁶. In this way, transcendent thinking, is at bottom objectal thinking, which unravels through the faculties of the psychic system.

¹⁵⁴ “Mais qu’est-ce qu’une telle pensée, et son processus dans le monde ?” (DR, 217).

¹⁵⁵ In the sixth chapter of *Difference and Givenness* (2008), Levi Bryant talks about the transcendent exercise of thought. However, Bryant does not situate transcendent thinking in Deleuze’s ontological scheme as an instance of differenciation. This results in a reading, which reads Ideas as mainly concerning transcendent thinking, whereas, in my view, they concern the whole series of transcendent exercises. It seems that this mistake originates from Bryant’s peculiar reading of virtual Ideas as differential essences.

¹⁵⁶ “C’est une chaîne forcée et brisée qui parcourt les morceaux d’un moi dissous comme les bords d’un Je fêlé” (DR, 190).

As discussed in 2.3., John Roffe (2015) distinguishes between objectal and subjectal thought. Roffe defines objectal as “the regime of objects and their primordial relationship with the pre-objectal field of intensive individuation” (p. 44). I followed Roffe in reading differentiation as objectal thinking. Deleuze writes, “Every body, every thing thinks and is a thought [pensée], in as much as, reduced to its intensive reasons [raisons], it expresses an Idea whose actualisation it determines” (DR, 327)¹⁵⁷. As a being is differentiated, it “thinks” the virtual Idea it actualises. Roffe contrasts this objectal thinking to subjectal thinking. By subjectal, Roffe refers to “the system composed by human thought, that is, the actual and achieved (that is individuated) noological capacities of *homo sapiens* – simply, human beings in the normal sense of the word” (Roffe 2015, 43–4).

However, we have to make a further clarification here. One level of Roffe’s subjectal thinking coincides with my reading of empirical thinking. What Roffe’s account does not specify, is the role of transcendent thinking. For him, “subjectal thought is representational in nature, and turns around the figures of the ‘I’ and the ‘Self’” (Roffe 2015, 52). Here, we have seen that transcendent thinking occurs at the very limit of the faculties of the thinker. To be exact, transcendent thinking cannot be experienced by a subject—it can only be suffered unconsciously by one. Transcendent thinking is at bottom objective thinking running through the faculties of a thinker, whether human or non-human. In this sense, it is very much a form of subjective thinking—what the case of learning showcases clearly.

4.3. Learning as an Instance of Transcendent Thinking

Empirical thinking operates according to the model of recognition and it produces propositional knowledge. Deleuze opposes learning to it. Learning differs in kind from knowledge and it concerns something “extra-propositional and sub-representative” (DR, 248). An act of learning does not reduce to its outcome, even if the result would be a representational proposition. As Deleuze writes, we cannot see from advance how someone is going to learn (DR, 215). Even though we can provide some sort of a roadmap for a learner, we cannot portray in advance how they are going to learn—everyone needs to wrestle through their own learning processes. For

¹⁵⁷ “Tout corps, toute chose pense et est une pensée, pour autant que, réduite à ses raisons intensives, elle exprime une Idée dont elle détermine l’actualisation” (DR, 327).

instance, we do not learn to play an instrument simply by reading a guidebook or listening to the teachings of someone (no matter how useful these will be for the process). Taking in all the possible propositional knowledge on the subject does not exhaust the need to try and fail oneself. In this way, learning is an experimentation on the part of the learner.

Deleuze writes that “[l]earning is nothing but the intermediary between non-knowledge and knowledge, the living passage from one to the other” (DR, 215)¹⁵⁸. Learning happens *between* the initial stage where the learner does not possess the resulting knowledge, and where they have attained it. Deleuze discusses learning to swim as an example¹⁵⁹. He writes that “[l]earning to swim [...] signifies composing the singular points of one’s own body [...] with those of another figure, with another element that dismembers us, but which makes us penetrate into a world of problems, until then, unknown and unprecedented” (DR, 248)¹⁶⁰. Learning means that the subject realigns itself according to new coordinates of the problematic field they find themselves in. In fact, as actualisation of actual objects is oriented by Ideas, learning means engaging with the Ideas as well (DR, 251). As Ideas are sub-representative, this points beyond the world of representation, beyond the determining judgments of the quotidian¹⁶¹.

Deleuze’s learning is something more precise than what we in the everyday take it to be. He writes that “‘learning’ always passes through the subconscious, it always passes in the subconsciousness (DR, 214)¹⁶².” The learner goes through something without being conscious of it—thus we cannot attain the exact moment of learning in empirical thinking. Indeed, when we add Deleuze’s characterisation of learning as “involuntary” and his association of a violence to it, suffered by the learner (DR 214–5), we are further drawn away from our usual conception of

¹⁵⁸ “Apprendre n’est que l’intermédiaire entre non-savoir et savoir, le passage vivant de l’un à l’autre” (DR, 215).

¹⁵⁹ My own example of learning to play an instrument, and Deleuze’s example of learning to swim, are both examples of learning a *skill*. Deleuze does not distinguish between learning a skill and learning something that can be expressed as a proposition. Indeed, he only utilizes the French ‘savoir’ (‘knowledge’), without distinguishing it from, for instance, ‘savoir-faire’ (‘know-how’). However, the cited passage about the act of learning between ‘savoir’ and ‘non-savoir’ could be read as referring to either kind of learning. I will offer my resolution of this issue in 5.1.

¹⁶⁰ “Apprendre à nager, [...] signifie composer les points singuliers de son propre corps [...] avec ceux d’une autre figure, d’un autre élément qui nous démembrer, mais nous fait pénétrer dans un monde de problèmes jusqu’alors inconnus, inouïs” (DR, 248).

¹⁶¹ Levi Bryant does not distinguish between empirical thinking and transcendent thinking. However, he suggests that empirical thinking, and knowledge, hold back learning: “[t]hought emerges from a lived encounter that disrupts habit and functions like a trauma or an amorous encounter that calls to be comprehended. Knowledge, by contrast, seeks recognition so that it might prevent such encounters and establish the smooth continuity of experience.” (Bryant 2008, 76.)

¹⁶² “[...] ‘apprendre’ passe toujours par l’inconscient, se passe toujours dans l’inconscient” (DR, 214).

learning. Therefore, it must be stressed that Deleuze's conception of learning departs from a conscious experience, which would fall within the empirical thinking.

For Deleuze, learning points towards a truly transcendental conception of thinking. Indeed, he writes that the "transcendental conditions of thinking must be deducted [prélevées]" "from learning, not from knowledge" (DR, 216). He also writes that "to learn, is to elevate a faculty to its disjoint transcendent exercise" (DR, 251, see Benoit 2018 146; Voss 2013, 63–4)¹⁶³. Clearly, learning is an instance of transcendent thinking¹⁶⁴, but we need to keep in mind Deleuze's precise meaning of 'learning'. Learning, as a transcendent exercise of thinking, is unconscious, lies beyond representation (even if its outcome can be represented), and happens between the initial stage of non-knowledge and knowledge.

At this point we can contrast transcendent thinking, with empirical thinking, as was evidenced by the determining judgment in the preceding chapter. Determining judgment operates on the level of representations. As we saw in chapter 3, when a judgment about an object of experience is made, the perceptual excitations of the object of experience are first represented as an intuition, and then it is recognized as conforming to a pre-given concept. In this way, empirical thinking functions along the model of recognition. As the object can only be recognized, this means that the system is closed: there can be no new concepts, and the objects of experience must conform to something already known. Deleuze writes that "representation and knowledge model themselves entirely upon the propositions of the consciousness, which designate cases of a solution; but these propositions themselves give a wholly inexact idea [notion] of the instances they resolve" (DR, 248)¹⁶⁵. Therefore, empirical thinking gives us an inexact understanding of what we meet. The difficulty of empirical thinking arises from the way they see the problematic instances, from where problematic Ideas arise—they fashion these instances on the familiar model of recognition. Transcendent thinking on the other hand is able to immerse into this

¹⁶³ "[...] apprendre, c'est élever une faculté à son exercice transcendant disjoint" (DR, 251).

¹⁶⁴ Tano S. Posteraro writes "that learning is to be conceived as the processual development and deployment of ability, that abilities are to be conceived virtually, and that knowledge is to be thought in terms of the successful performance of these abilities." (Posteraro 2015, 470). My interpretation coincides with the characterisation of "processual development", but I would not use 'deployment', since it has an active connotation—something Deleuze's learning is not. I do not want to venture into abilities, but Deleuze contrasts explicitly knowledge with learning, and so this reconceptualization departs from *Difference and Repetition*.

¹⁶⁵ "[...] la représentation et le savoir se modèlent entièrement sur les propositions de la conscience qui désignent les cas de solution ; mais ces propositions par elles-mêmes donnent une notion tout à fait inexacte de l'instance qu'elles résolvent" (DR, 248).

problematic field—it is able to engage in learning, and thus transform and enrich the system of representational thinking of a psychic system.

However, one might object that the empirical exercise of the faculties does not constitute thinking at all for Deleuze—that only transcendent thinking constitutes genuine thinking for Deleuze. I point out that in several instances, Deleuze refers to transcendent thinking as being constituted inside of thinking: “[...] the genesis of act of thinking in thinking itself” (DR, 182) and “thinking engendered inside thought” (DR, 353). Also, when describing thinking, which remains “stupid”, that is without using all of its powers it can only attain in transcendent thinking, Deleuze again refers to “thinking” [pensée]. For these reasons, I maintain that Deleuze would take what I call empirical thinking, thinking. However, these do constitute two different types of thinking—just as I have argued above. In the next chapter, we are going to go through how transcendent thinking is able to venture where empirical thinking cannot—creation of something new in thinking.

5. Thinking the New: Conclusions and Discussion

In this chapter, I begin with a summary of the main goal of my Master’s thesis: my reading of thinking in *Difference and Repetition*. I also highlight in what ways it ameliorates the understanding of this issue in the secondary literature. Second, I discuss the implications transcendent thinking has for our conception of creation. Third, I evaluate how Deleuze succeeds overcoming some of the problems he has raised in his critique of Kant (and other philosophers committed to the dogmatic image of thought which I introduced in 3.2). Does Deleuze overcome the distinction between intuition and concept, or that between thought and being? In what sense is Deleuze’s conception of thinking not traced from the empirical? I will finish with a sketch of some further lines of investigation, which my research has raised.

Transcendent thinking means that the quotidian thinking is disrupted. The workings of the cognitive capacities, or the faculties, of the thinker are forced into a discordant relation by an encounter in sensibility. A chain of encounters beginning from sensibility comes together in transcendent thinking. An Idea traverses the faculties, elevating them to their transcendent exercise. The limit-object of each faculty is something which only the faculty in question can encounter, e.g. that which is only imaginable but unimaginable in the empirical exercise of

imagination. The limit-object reveals the faculty's internal difference. As the limit-objects of the faculties cannot be comprehended by other faculties, they cannot converge upon an identical object, nor collaborate harmoniously. In transcendent thinking, the faculties work according to a para-sense, opposed to the common sense of their empirical use which is part of the dogmatic image of thought Deleuze wants to escape. The resulting transcendent thinking is involuntary, sub-representational and unconscious (because conscious exercise is empirical and representational), escaping the yoke of representation Deleuze criticizes.

My interpretation ameliorates our vision of thinking in *Difference and Repetition*. First, by reading Deleuze's transcendent thinking in contrast to Kant's determining judgment, I was able to frame this difficult concept with accuracy, making it possible to understand its implications fully. In the same way that the determining judgment is constituted by operations of imagination and the understanding, transcendent thinking is a result of the transcendent exercise of the faculties. This explains why Deleuze discusses so briefly the intermediate exercises of imagination and memory—they do not correspond to an experience, conscious or unconscious, and as such, are only understood as intermediate steps in the series coming together in transcendent thinking. This step was also crucial, because it uncovers the relation between empirical and transcendent thinking, as transcendent thinking is a disruption of the former.

Second, my interpretation situates transcendent thinking into Deleuze's overall ontology. John Roffe has distinguished objectal thinking (process of differenciation^t_c) and subjectal thinking (what I have referred to as empirical thinking) in *Difference and Repetition* (see 4.3.). I add that transcendent thinking is a special case of differenciation^t_c, something no interpreter has stressed (to my knowledge) before, as such, it is a special case of objectal thinking that runs through the actualized faculties of a psychic system.

Third, my interpretation renders clear the relationship between learning and thinking: transcendent thinking is the more profound notion, whereas learning is an example (granted, a privileged one for Deleuze) of it. For instance, the otherwise incisive reading of Tano Posteraro (2015) fails to differentiate between thinking and learning (Posteraro 2015, 467), as does Daniela Voss's otherwise excellent reading (Voss 2013, 61). My interpretation will lead to some important implications for our conception of creation—which I will discuss next.

5.1. Creation and Transcendent Thinking

Deleuze identified himself as an empiricist in Whitehead's sense. For him it means that his goal was to "find the conditions under which something new is produced."¹⁶⁶ First, I will discuss what transcendent thinking tells us about creating something new in thinking. I then discuss, in a very preliminary manner, some lines of further investigation concerning transcendent thinking and creation in philosophy and the relation between transcendent thinking and Deleuze's transcendental empiricism and his later philosophy.

For Deleuze, "[...] thinking is not innate, but needs to be engendered in thinking." (DR, 192; see Benit 2018, 26)¹⁶⁷. Elsewhere, he states clearly that this means transcendent thinking: "Thinking is at the extreme order of a chain in which every faculty communicates the violence to another." (DR, 251)¹⁶⁸. So, in this sense, transcendent thinking revealed by Deleuze's conception is what really *ought* to be taken for *thinking*. Empirical thinking is thinking which does not utilize its powers fully.

To start transcendent thinking, we need an encounter: "[...] thinking does not think unless it is obliged [contrainte] and forced in the presence of that which 'gives something to think' about that which is to be thought about—and that which is thought about, it's the unthinkable or the non-thought, that is *the perpetual fact* that "we are not thinking yet" (DR, 188)¹⁶⁹. The unthinkable here refers to what is unthinkable from the point of view of empirical thinking. For Deleuze, this is the fact that empirical thinking sees itself as an exhaustive conception of thinking, as the perfect embodiment of thinking according to the image of thought (see 3.2). In other words, empirical thinking does not see the possibility of transcendent thinking.

To think something new, to create an act of transcendent thinking, we need to disrupt empirical thinking. In empirical thinking, the faculties orient themselves into their habitual paths and processes. They function according to a pre-conceived common sense—presupposing what they

¹⁶⁶ "[...] trouver les conditions sous lesquelles se produit quelque chose de nouveau" (Deleuze 2003 (or. 1987), 284).

¹⁶⁷ "Il sait que penser n'est pas inné, mais doit être engendré dans la pensée" (DR, 192).

¹⁶⁸ "Pensée est à l'extrémité d'un ordre d'une chaîne dans laquelle chaque facultés communique la violence à l'autre" (DR, 251).

¹⁶⁹ "[...] la pensée ne pense que contrainte et forcée, en présence de ce qui "donne à penser", de ce qui est à penser – et ce qui est à penser, c'est aussi bien l'impensable ou la non-pensée, c'est-à-dire *le fait* perpétuel que "nous ne pensons pas encore" (DR, 188).

meet is an identical unified object. In contrast, in their transcendent exercise, the faculties meet what is only proper to them, not something assumed to be unified. As highlighted by determining judgment, empirical thinking can only recognize objects it has already met, and as such, it is incapable of change (see Benit 2018, 24; Posteraro 2015, 456). In transcendent thinking, it ascends to “a *terra incognita* never recognized or recognizable.” (DR, 177)¹⁷⁰, that is, to something new in thinking.

In the psychic system, empirical thinking means that the system operates on its given constitution and the identity of the thinker remains the same throughout the act of thought. In the case of learning, we saw that this means a shift in the constitution of the thinker—in order to really learn something, the psychic system needs to reorient itself and *change* itself. Transcendent thinking *disrupts* empirical thinking and, indeed, changes it. After learning something new, the thinker has changed¹⁷¹.

In the beginning of chapter 4, I noted in a footnote that Deleuze does not distinguish between learning a skill and learning something propositional. I believe that at this point we can clarify how these fit into Deleuze’s conception of learning. First, when we learn something propositional, the proposition is the result of the process of differentiation—it is the product of differentiation running through the faculties. This means that the psychic system’s possible states have shifted, as a new piece of representations is introduced into its circuit. Second, with learning a skill, the capacities of the thinker have been modified. As it is in most cases, this results in new capacities of the body of the thinker. For instance, the swimmer has learned to align his body and to paddle their limbs in a rhythm in a manner that they do not sink and actually move along the surface of the body of the water. In all kinds of learning, the actualization of the thinker (on the level of actual being) is shifted and this results in modifications on different levels. In the case of

¹⁷⁰ “[...] une *terra incognita* jamais reconnue ni reconnaissable” (DR, 177).

¹⁷¹ Daniela Voss writes that the “‘exteriority of thought’ is distinguished from the form of interiority of thought, [page break] which closes thought upon itself. Deleuze aims to substitute for the Kantian transcendental conditions of knowledge qua representation transcendental, genetic conditions of the emergence of thought and the production of the real.” (Voss 2013, 25–26.) I agree with the latter sentence. However, whereas Voss conceptualizes the difference between empirical and transcendent thinking as a difference of interiority and exteriority, my interpretation emphasises that empirical thinking both kinds of thinking originate in the psychic system. However, empirical thinking, is in a sense, closed unto itself, as it is incapable of creation.

a skill, the capacities of the body are extended or modified, whereas in the case of propositional learning, the variations and combinations the psychic system can undergo are extended.

Indeed, Deleuze writes that “[t]he subject of cartesian cogito does not think, it only has the possibility of thinking, et keeps itself stupid within this possibility.” (DR 353–4.)¹⁷² This means that the thinker is retained within empirical thinking, unable to really produce anything new, only abstract iterations of what is already known. The thinker needs to open up to its internal difference to receive “the Difference in thinking, from which it can think” (DR 354).¹⁷³ In transcendent thinking, the thinker opens up to its internal difference. The thinker of transcendent thinking is the fractured I, the “passive self originating from a non-foundation [d’un sans fond] which it contemplates” (DR, 354)¹⁷⁴ that is, the passive self made up of contraction-contemplation (see 1.3.), and arising from the internal difference. This self arises through the process of differentiation. For Deleuze, “[...] thinking does not think but with difference, around this point of collapsing” (DR 354).¹⁷⁵ To truly think, is to fall apart, and arise as something which has gone through a *change*.

The bedrock for the emergence of something new is established in Deleuze’s new philosophy of difference. As the internal difference unravels, something new emerges, something which is not identical to what was before, but which is different to it. This is the ontological level of Deleuze’s project. “Actualisation, différenciation, in this sense, is a veritable creation” (DR, 273)¹⁷⁶. Bryant reiterates well Deleuze’s claim: “Being creates, we are part of that creation. Being is not, for Deleuze, our creation” (Bryant 2008, 12). As transcendent thinking is a special case of differentiation, it constitutes a transformation of the psychic system, which leads to a change in thinking: something new is thought¹⁷⁷. Transcendent thinking constitutes the possibility of creation and creativity in subjective thought, in the thinking psychic systems undergo.

¹⁷² “Le sujet du cogito cartésien ne pense pas, il a seulement la possibilité de penser, et se tient stupide au sein de cette possibilité” (DR, 353–4).

¹⁷³ “[...] la Différence dans la pensée, à partir de laquelle elle pense” (DR, 354).

¹⁷⁴ “[...] un moi passif issu d’un sans fond qu’il contemple” (DR, 354).

¹⁷⁵ “[...] la pensée ne pense qu’avec la différence, autour de ce point d’effondrement” (DR, 354).

¹⁷⁶ “L’actualisation, la différenciation, en ce sens, est toujours une véritable création” (DR, 273).

¹⁷⁷ Bryant is clearly mistaken in his interpretation of Deleuze’s thinking. Bryant seems to fall into a solipsism: “thought is no longer conceived of as a representation of being but is instead productive of being itself. For Deleuze, thought produces its intuitions through the differentials or rules that function as productive principles. Deleuze will

Indeed, transcendent thinking goes beyond the dogmatic image of thought. Deleuze writes that “[t]he condition of a real critique and real creation are the same: destruction of the image of thought which presupposes itself, genesis of the act of thinking in thinking itself” (DR, 182)¹⁷⁸. In this passage, the condition of critique and creation is clearly transcendent thinking (“act of thinking in thinking itself”). What’s more, transcendent thinking is tantamount to destroying the dogmatic image of thought.

At the end of the third chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, where Deleuze laid out his criticism against precedent thinkers for their reliance on the image of thought, he writes about the possibility of “thinking without image” (DR, 217). This is thinking which “is born inside thinking, act of thinking engendered in its genitility, not given in innateness nor supposed in reminiscence” (DR, 217)¹⁷⁹. Here, Deleuze clearly links transcendent thinking with the image of thought without image—a chance for philosophy to free itself from the yoke of the dogmatic image of thought and create something new. Additionally, in this way, our understanding of thinking can treat change, which is left out from the static dogmatic image of thought (DR, 286).

However, this leads to the question of does transcendent thinking reveal the conditions of, or maybe even constitute a case of, creation in philosophy? Due to the scope of this Master’s thesis, I can only sketch out three (potentially irreconcilable) lines of interpretation, which would require more research to determine whether they would be backed by Deleuze’s texts.

First, Deleuze calls his project in *Difference and Repetition* “transcendental empiricism” or a “superior empiricism” (DR, 80)¹⁸⁰ and transcendent thinking must be connected to it¹⁸¹. Deleuze

hold that all intuition is of this nature, though admittedly only a very limited zone of thought consciously takes this form.” (Bryant 2008, 12.) In this thesis, my interpretation relies on a correct situation of Deleuze’s thinking in his ontology. In this way, we can escape solipsistic misunderstandings.

¹⁷⁸ “Les conditions d’une véritable critique et d’une véritable création sont les mêmes : destruction de l’image d’une pensée qui se présuppose elle-même, genèse de l’acte de penser dans la pensée même” (DR, 182).

¹⁷⁹ “La pensée qui naît dans la pensée, l’acte de penser engendré dans sa génitilité, ni donné dans l’innéité ni supposé dans la reminiscence, est la pensée sans image” (DR, 217).

¹⁸⁰ Even later, Deleuze subscribed to the label of empiricism, which starts from the concrete: “to analyse the state of things, in the way we can draw from them non-pre-existing concepts. And the states of things are not unities, nor totalities, but multiplicities.” (Deleuze 2003b (or. 1987), 284)¹⁸⁰.

¹⁸¹ Transcendental empiricism does not only consist of subscribing to the ontology of *Difference and Repetition* and its extensive interpretation falls outside of my Master’s thesis. Daniela Voss describes it as follows: “If Deleuze calls his philosophy ‘transcendental empiricism’, then he uses the term transcendental in an entirely modified meaning. The necessity of thought cannot be encountered by closing thought upon itself. Rather, thought must be opened up to the outside world that has to be conceived as a true exterior. The term ‘empiricism’ in Deleuze’s ‘transcendental empiricism’ means restoring exteriority to the world, as well as the concrete diversity and plenitude of the sensible.

writes that transcendental empiricism investigates the “intensive world of differences, where qualities discover their reason and the sensible its being” (DR, 80)¹⁸². Since we cannot directly investigate intensity, we can presume that transcendental empiricism needs to proceed through interpreting its signs in an analogous fashion to how sensibility meets intensity *via* the sign of sensible intensity (see 4.1.)¹⁸³. How this happens exactly would need further research, but Francois Zourabichvili (2003) suggests that expositions of rare experiences from literature and clinical material could be utilized (pp. 35–6). Literal fantasies and descriptions of unconscious experiences (e.g. through case reports of schizophrenics) would include sign of intensity to be investigated. This line of interpretation preliminarily suggests that creation in philosophy, developing a conception of thinking beyond the dogmatic image of thought, would rely on interpretation of the signs of intensity from material describing cases of transcendent thinking¹⁸⁴.

Second line of interpreting the conditions of creation in philosophy, is to see philosophy as a system¹⁸⁵, which needs to expose itself to encounters with non-philosophy. This presumes that transcendent thinking outlines the conditions of creation in general. A system must confront its internal difference, in order to change, and this happens through an encounter with its limit-object. Philosophy’s encounter would then, preliminarily, consist of confronting non-philosophy like an empirical science or an art form, which pushes it to its limits (by posing a new philosophical problem, for instance). As a result, something new would emerge inside the system of philosophy as a result¹⁸⁶.

A third option would be to see that creation in philosophy would originate from philosophers, and transcendent thinking (learning) would be a description of it. However, this might not be

Whatever forces us to think comes from this outside. It imposes itself upon us and intrudes as involuntary thought.” (Voss 2013, 25 ; see also Sauvagnargues 2010)”

¹⁸² “Le monde intense des différences, où les qualités trouvent leur raison et le sensible, son être” (DR, 80).

¹⁸³ However, transcendental empiricism does not present itself as a universal method. Ideas always arise from problematic fields, so we need a new kind of approach for each domain, for each Idea (DR, 235). This highlights the way *Difference and Repetition*, marks out Deleuze as a post-structuralist. Even though he seems to outline a sort of structuralist metaphysics, claiming even that virtual “Idea defines itself as a structure,” (DR, 237), he opposes developing a universal method.

¹⁸⁴ Levi Bryant interprets transcendental empiricism as relying on an anti-methodology, made up of the phases of transcendent thinking (Bryant 2008, 18). My reading of transcendent thinking interprets it as subjective thinking, which philosophy as such can hardly undergo.

¹⁸⁵ Or alternatively, seeing as a system each philosophical theory, the work of a particular philosopher, or a tradition.

¹⁸⁶ Daniela Voss has noted that Deleuze’s reading of differential calculus should be seen itself as a productive encounter, in which philosophy has gained something by entering into a fecund relation with mathematics. (Voss, 200).

compatible with seeing philosophy, or individual philosophical theories, as systems in the sense of *Difference and Repetition*. However, Deleuze writes that “the being of the sensible is revealed in works of art, at the same time that works of art appear as experimentations” (DR, 94). This would suggest the possibility of a philosopher encountering non-philosophy (art work), and transcendent thinking unravelling from this encounter. However, further research would be necessary to evaluate my preliminary doubt about this line of interpretation.

These further lines of research could also investigate the possible connections and discontinuities of *Difference and Repetition* and later works. In the Letter-Preface to Jean-Clet Martin (2003c, original 1990), Deleuze reveals that the image of thought was still in 1990 the most important concept in *Difference and Repetition* for him. He also connects an “exercice of thought” to the possibility of creative philosophy (p. 339, see Voss 2013, 30). If this exercise of thought was transcendent thinking, the connections between later works might prove fruitful. In *What is Philosophy* (1991), the last collaborative work between Deleuze and Guattari, they return to the concept of image of thought (e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 2005 (or. 1991), 41) and define philosophy’s task as that of creating concepts (ibid, 8). Maybe there too, transcendent thinking is somehow connected to creation in philosophy.

However, to go back to the conception of transcendent thinking in *Difference and Repetition*, it seems to imply that creation involves less agency than we usually take it to. The notion of creation usually is associated with an idea of authorship and originality. A poet chooses what they want to write and a mathematician which equation to solve. However, does Deleuze’s conception of creation allow this? Empirical thinking is active but incapable of creation—it is forever doomed to repeat what has already been thought, as Deleuze outlines when he ascribes the model of recognition to it. However, transcendent thinking can create, but it is a forced act and lies in the subconsciousness of the thinker. Is there any room for agency here? Deleuze writes that “[t]he speech and actions of men engender material and nude repetitions, but as the effects of more profound repetitions of another kind” (DR, 371)¹⁸⁷. This passage would suggest that human subjects would have fairly restrained agency, being doomed to reiterate already given paths and being incapable of genuine choices. Even though this suggestion would need further

¹⁸⁷ “Les paroles et les actions des hommes engendrent des répétitions matérielles ou nues, mais comme l’effet de répétitions plus profondes et d’une autre nature” (DR, 371).

investigation, we can conclude that creation in thinking, and elsewhere, is modelled along transcendent thinking and as such, does not allow for creative agency. Creation originates from being and cannot be but suffered by the psychic system for something truly new to emerge¹⁸⁸.

5.2. Beyond Kant

Evidently, Kant's influence for Deleuze's conception of thinking has been enormous (see chapters 3 and 4). Additionally, Deleuze locates the discovery of internal difference in Kant's critique of Descartes (see 1.1.) and he even sees Kant's third *Critique* as opening up the way for transcendent thinking (see 3.3.). However, in an interview, Deleuze classified Kant as an "enemy" (Deleuze 1990, 15). Indeed, Deleuze criticises Kant relentlessly, and in this subchapter, I discuss whether Deleuze succeeds in overcoming two objections he has posed to Kant. First, does Deleuze fare better in providing a transcendental conception of subjectivity than Kant, whom he criticizes for tracing the transcendental from the empirical? Second, Deleuze does not accept Kant's duality between intuition and concept—does Deleuze's own description of thinking overcome this duality?

Deleuze criticizes Kant for tracing the transcendental from the empirical: "contrary to what Kant believes, it [i.e. the transcendental] cannot be deduced from ordinary empirical forms as they appear under the determination of a *sensus communis*¹⁸⁹" (DR, 186; see Deleuze 2003c (or. 1990), 339; see Voss 2013, 24)¹⁹⁰. In 3.1., we saw that the empirical, psychological description, of thinking rests upon the common sense of the faculties. Deleuze does not dispose with the faculties altogether as he holds a theory of the faculties as necessary for philosophy (DR, 186). If we take Kant's route, according to Deleuze, we anchor our conception of the transcendental conditions of experience unto empirical human psychology. Deleuze wants to avoid this, and

¹⁸⁸ The prevalent view among French thinkers of the time seems to have been to question authorship and free agency. For instance, in Michel Foucault's (1926–1984) *What is an Author?* (Foucault 2004 or. 1969, pp. 290–318), Foucault questions our assumptions about a literal works author's role and significance. However, Deleuze's view on restricted agency finds its justification in the ontological scheme of *Difference and Repetition*.

¹⁸⁹ The allegation of tracing the transcendental condition of experience from empirical psychology might seem perplexing to many readers of Kant. However, as we saw in 3.1., Deleuze is basing his claim on a reading of Kant's A-deduction with its synthesis of the faculties making up the determining judgment, or the judgment of experience. Maybe Deleuze is uncovering the reason why Kant made the changes to the later B-edition of the deduction.

¹⁹⁰ "[...] contrairement à ce que croyait Kant, il ne peut pas être induit des formes empiriques ordinaires telles qu'elles apparaissent sous la détermination du sens commun" (DR, 186).

therefore, the transcendental has to be discovered in another kind of thinking, namely transcendent thinking, where the faculties do not converge under common sense (DR, 186).

This leads Deleuze to leave his conception of faculties open-ended¹⁹¹: he states that we might discover new faculties and talks about non-conventional faculties, such as the faculties of language and sociability¹⁹². (DR, 186–7, 330–1, see also Voss 2013, 142.) This is a clear departure from Kant, for whom the faculties are stable, and his picture of them intended to be definitive.

For Deleuze, the faculties are not the faculties of a transcendental subject, nor those of a particular empirical psychic system. A conception of faculties must be situated into his overall ontology. Levi Bryant is right in taking faculties to be “tendencies characterizing being” (Bryant 2008, 97–8). For Deleuze, faculties must arise from being, and they cannot be those of a particular empirical subject (see Voss 2013, 142)—they must explain the constitution of subjectivity in all of its possible manifestations¹⁹³.

However, Deleuze does not provide an explicit description of how to situate the faculties to the process of differenciation. I take it that, as any object, the faculty too has a virtual side, and an actual side (see chapter 2). For instance, the virtual Idea of memory must have arisen from a certain problematic field. For example, animals have developed different kinds of capacities of recollection in interaction with their environment. In order to survive, recollection of, for instance the location of past food sources, has been necessary. However, the food sources of different species require different kinds of capabilities (for instance, migratory birds have exceptional

¹⁹¹ I take the open-ended nature of Deleuze’s faculties leads him to refrain from enumerating or outlining different types of acts of cognition. If there can be unheard of faculties, what would be the point of giving an exhaustive list of different types of mental acts? However, Deleuze takes Kant as providing a conception of the empirical exercise of the faculties, and of empirical thinking (DR 186).

¹⁹² Deleuze is quick to add that he is not striving for “the establishment of such a doctrine of the faculties”, instead, pursuing only to seek out the “nature of its requirements [exigences]” (DR, 187). This seems in line with my idea that the account of the faculties should be left open-ended—something a full doctrine would strive to close definitively. However, a further line of research would be open to verify whether Deleuze develops further his account of different faculties in his oeuvre.

¹⁹³ The reader is reminded of the three syntheses of time I introduced in the first chapter. I take it that there Deleuze is explaining the emergence of passive subjectivity from the point of view of the concepts difference and repetition, with time as the form of change being an important aspect as well. Here, I am turning toward the emergence of subjectivity, assuming that we can explicate the emergence of subjectivity in relation to the concept of differenciation.

navigational capacities, which for Deleuze, would be related to the faculty of memory). On the one hand, the virtual Idea of memory has been differentiated from a problematic field constituted by these kinds of problems. On the other hand, the Idea of a faculty is actualised in different ways in different psychic systems. This means that the Idea of a faculty finds many kinds of actual manifestations.

Second, who or what is Deleuze's thinker here? The faculties arise from being, but they situate themselves within a psychic system. To be precise, Deleuze talks about the psychic system of the "Self-I", instead of the term subject. The "Self" is the content of the system, the different faculties or capabilities of thinking. The "I" refers to the psychic organization of the psychic system, or how the different capabilities relate to one another and how they interact. (DR, 330–1.)¹⁹⁴ The actualization of a psychic system must progress in the familiar manner of differentiation. The actualised faculties correspond to the differential relations of the Idea, whereas their organization to the singular points of the Idea¹⁹⁵. As the virtual Idea of the psychic system is actualised, these aspects of the virtual Idea get their actual manifestation.

This means that Deleuze's conception of subjectivity is truly transcendental. As differentiation produces the faculties and how they operate, subjectivity is no longer modeled on the empirical manifestation of a human subjectivity. This leads to the consequence that subjectivity is manifested through different animated beings in diverse ways: different constellations of cognitive capacities are formed, and in each case, the actualized faculty aligns itself unto a continuum with other incarnations of the faculty. Thus, psychic systems cannot any more be analysed along clear-cut categorizations—it would be more appropriate, for instance to speak about variation of rationality in animals, than of the human animal being separated from the other

¹⁹⁴ I am leaving out the possibility of a single faculty arising. In that case, it would not have a relation to any other faculties and would thus only satisfy the content characteristic of a psychic system. However, it might be envisaged that singular faculties might themselves be taken to be psychic systems. This might mean that the Idea of a faculty would become too large: would a piece of paper, or any surface which can be used for mark-making, count as an actualization of memory? This line of interpretation would lead to a pan-psychism Deleuze did not seem to uphold.

¹⁹⁵ Where Levi Bryant writes that the faculties "are the differentials or joints of being itself, and not faculties of a subject's mind." (Bryant 2008, 97–8), he fails to situate the conception of faculties in relation to differentiation. To be precise, a faculty does find an actual expression in an actual psychic system, in "a subject's mind". However, he is right in emphasising the difference between Deleuze's conception of faculty from, for instance, the Kantian conception, i.e., that Deleuze does not trace his conception from a particular empirical subject.

by its rationality (given that not all psychic systems exemplify all particular capabilities associated with being rational).

Second objection Deleuze has posed to Kant is the denial of the separation between concept and intuition (DR 79–80; see Bryant 2008, 8–9). In 3.1., we saw how Deleuze’s reading of Kant’s determining judgment places importance on the notion of schematisation. This step in the syntheses adapts intuitions for the application of understanding’s concepts and, in fact, it covers over the gap between intuition and concept. For Kant, the two are separated: they differ in kind, which raises the question of how they can in principle come to interact (see Watkins 2017). Thus, schematisation functions for Kant as the bridge between these two kinds of things. However, Kant does not provide details on how this happens, as he writes that “schematism of our understanding is a hidden art [*Kunst*] in the depths of the human soul, whose true operations we can divine from nature and lay unveiled before our eyes only with difficulty” (CPR, A141/B180–1).

For Deleuze, there is no such separation between intuition and concept. The virtual multiplicities, Ideas, arise from being in the process of differential $\frac{t}{c}$ -iation. As we saw in 2.3., virtual Ideas and actual being progress in differential $\frac{t}{c}$ -iation. There is no strict separation between concept and intuition, nor between being and thought in Deleuze. The virtual is an ontological order, not something absolutely separated from being. And as Ideas are the differentials of thinking, as in 4.2., there is no separation akin to that of intuition and concept. Experience is synthesised in the unravelling of this process in being¹⁹⁶. This means that Deleuze’s ontology avoids the pitfalls he attributes to philosophies which rely on a separation of thought and being (such as Platonic ideas removed from the ephemeral reality of experience) or intuition and thought (such as Kant).

5.3. Further Questions for Investigation

So far, we have encountered several further lines of investigation raised by my Master’s thesis. First, offering a consistent reading of the ontological order of intensity. Second, interpreting the

¹⁹⁶ Levi Bryant writes in a similar vein: “[t]he Ideas uncovered in the encounter are real, independent of subjectivity, and their intelligibility has a universality proper to it that is every bit as binding as that found in Platonic forms. Here the essences discovered through the encounter are not beings of a subject’s thought, but belong to being itself in such a way that the opposition between thought and being is undermined.” (Bryant 2008, 13)

expressive relation between intensity and virtual Ideas (something which concerns especially how objectal thinking, and following my reading, also transcendent thinking, are expressions of a virtual Idea, see 2.3. and chapter 4). Third, situating transcendent thinking in relation to transcendental empiricism (something I was able to only discuss only preliminarily in 5.1.). Fourth, investigating the importance of transcendent thinking and image of thought without an image for Deleuze's later thinking and collaborations with Guattari would constitute another interesting research opportunity. Fifth, even though Deleuze outlines the conditions of creation, this doesn't seem to leave any room for freedom, or unrestricted agency. Looking whether there is a resolution somewhere in Deleuze's work for this would constitute a new subject of research. Below, I am going to outline further lines of research which arise from my interpretation of transcendent thinking.

First, even though I read Kant's determining judgment as an example of empirical thinking, further research is required to understand more clearly how Deleuze sees this phenomenon. In this Master's thesis, empirical thinking was treated mainly as providing a necessary backdrop for interpreting transcendent thinking. On the one hand, is empirical thinking based on, or does it arise from objectal thinking? In 1.3., I discussed how identities are produced by difference and repetition. In the preceding subchapter, I argued that the constitution of the psychic system is engendered by difference: the faculties are an actualization of a virtual Idea, and they make up the psychic system. However, is empirical thinking, representational thinking, in its entire spectre produced as an effect of difference the psychic system undergoes in the same way, e.g., identities are produced?

On the other hand, the status of logic and mathematical laws is itself a question worthy of further investigation in Deleuze's oeuvre—and it also concerns empirical thinking. In the overall scheme we have unraveled here, mathematical entities and structures, maybe even logic, might be located on the level of representation. However, further research would be needed to determine what the status of these entities and laws is. Are they also a product of difference¹⁹⁷, or would they be

¹⁹⁷ In some instances, it seems Deleuze alludes to a similar relation of process and product, as we saw in the case of the differentiation of actual objects as the conditions of representation of objects. Take for instance this sentence: "No concept receives a logical division in representation, if this division were not determined by sub-representational

more precisely tendencies of being? Further investigation to these topics would probably have to look beyond *Difference and Repetition* (1968) to complement its picture with *The Logic of Sense* (1969) and later works.

The preceding line of investigation leads to the next one: the question of Deleuze's relation to phenomenology. First, contrasting, e.g., Edmund Husserl's early phenomenology on the status of mathematical and logical truths might prove fruitful for the previous line of enquiry. Husserl criticized psychologism, i.e. the view that logical and mathematical truths fall within empirical psychology (Zahavi 2003,8). Due to Deleuze's insistence on avoiding empirical psychology as the basis of a transcendental conception of thinking (see 5.2), a psychologistic account of logical laws and mathematics does seem out of question for Deleuze¹⁹⁸. For Husserl, psychologistic account does not do justice to the difference of kind between logical truths (being necessary) and the act which utilize them (acts which are contingent). In order to account for these, Husserl established phenomenology to study the objects of knowledge and the a priori features of the conscious acts which deal with them. (Zahavi 2003, 11.) From there, Husserl envisioned we could proceed to the foundation of a priori laws of logic and mathematics (ibid, 8). Even though Deleuze does not seem to have any similar founding motivation, and he might even disagree with Husserl on the difference of kind between mathematical objects and the intentional acts treating them, Deleuze's views about empirical thinking might be illuminated in contrast with early Husserl.

However, more interesting questions arise concerning Deleuze's relation and probable opposition, to phenomenological method¹⁹⁹. Some key concepts of phenomenology, such as consciousness and intentionality seem to be missing almost completely from *Difference and Repetition*. Transcendent thought is vital for Deleuze's project of transcendental empiricism. As transcendental thought is unconscious and nonvoluntary, it resists first-person exploration phenomenology utilizes to attain necessary structures of thought (see Zourabievili 2003, 45–6).

dynamisms" (Deleuze 2002b, 134–5). However, Deleuze might be just suggesting that a logical division presupposes a division arising from his procedural ontological level.

¹⁹⁸ In 2.2., I explored Deleuze's interpretation of the differential calculus. However, Deleuze does not take the differential calculus to answer questions about logic and mathematics in general, and I used the interpretation for expository purposes to highlight Deleuze's conception of virtual Ideas. (see 2.2. above).

¹⁹⁹ Alain Beaulieu has stated that phenomenology has been a constant preoccupation of Deleuze throughout his thinking. Not only as an enemy, but also as sharing some important aspects of doing philosophy. (Beaulieu 2014, 11.)

Investigating exactly why Deleuze departs from phenomenology would be an illuminating subject in itself and also work as a good challenge to Deleuze.

A further difference arises, when we focus on the role of the ego, the thinking self. In Deleuze's transcendental thinking, the thinker's identity is disrupted (see 4.2.). Contrary to many phenomenologists²⁰⁰, Deleuze aims to divert from the first-person investigation. Indeed, transcendent thinking relies on the fractured I, whose internal difference has been exposed, and in a sense, opened to its changing outside. However, Deleuze must have been familiar²⁰¹ with non-egological account of phenomenology in Sartre's *Transcendence of the Ego* (1936)²⁰² and it would be interesting to explore further what similarities persist between these two—this would clarify the methodological aspect of transcendental empiricism.

All in all, Deleuze's conception of thinking in *Difference and Repetition* is highly complex but extremely versatile. It situates all kinds of entities, from virtual Ideas to emerging psychic systems, in the same ontological scheme. Conceptual structures do not float to a Platonic heaven, nor is thinking reduced to the material functioning of the brain. Thinking, in both its empirical and transcendent exercise, is explained as a process embedded into being. As I have shown, this also reveals the conditions of change and creation, albeit with the implication that creation is not chosen or performed, but instead undergone or suffered through. To engender something new in thought, thinking needs to open up to its constituting internal difference, and unconsciously attain something novel, changing the thinker in the process. All in all, Deleuze's conception of thinking in *Difference and Repetition* points towards important implications and further elaborations, some of which this Master's thesis has striven to outline.

²⁰⁰ For instance, for Husserl in *Ideas I*, even after performing the phenomenological reduction, “the pure ego seems to be something intrinsically *necessary* and something absolutely identical in the course of every actual and possible change of experiences” (Husserl 2014, §57, 105). In this way, “the ego is inherent in every experience as it comes about and streams away” (ibid.).

²⁰¹ Sartre's influence is hinted at, for instance, Deleuze cites Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (1943) in the early text from 1945, *Description of the Woman* (Deleuze 2015c, 253), but it is testified explicitly by “*He was my master*” (Deleuze 2002c, or. 1964).

²⁰² For a nonegoic interpretation of Sartre's text, see Vincini and Gallagher (2016). Vincini and Gallagher also discuss Aron Gurwitsch's nonegoic conceptions, which might also prove to be interesting in relation to Deleuze.

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